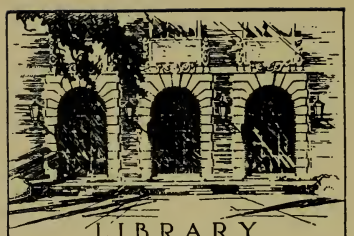

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98.

MUCH TO BLAME.

A TALE.

BY A CELEBRATED AUTHOR.

" Lessons of wisdom have never so much power over us as when they are wrought into the heart through the ground-work of some story which interests our passions."—STERNE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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MUCH TO BLAME.

CHAPTER I.

Sir George Villeroy, Bart. married his first wife for love, his second for money. The first was taken from him when his only surviving child, a daughter, was ten years old, and he loved this living semblance of his first wife with so strong an affection, that he would not probably have married again, had not the unexpected derangement of his affairs made it desirable to him to accept the pecuniary assistance, which was all but offered to him by Miss Elizabeth Badderly. Sir George was so indolent and careless a man that his steward was able to defraud him of a very large sum of money; and this loss obliged

him either to alter his manner of living, to a very painful degree, to leave his country, or to accumulate debts. The first was repugnant to his love of indulgence, the second to his love of his country, the third to his love of integrity. An advantageous marriage was another resource, and Miss Badderly, a faded beauty, nearly on the verge of forty, who was said to live single for his sake, expressed such excessive sorrow for his losses, and such affection for his little Julia, that he could not but believe she would willingly repair the former with her fortune, and be a mother to the latter. Nor was the lady slow to convince him that his conjectures were right; and she bestowed on him herself and her three thousand a year as soon as he asked for them, taking care, however, to stipulate for a handsome jointure, ample pin-money, and a large provision for younger children.

Lady Villeroy was now at the height of her wishes. She had never felt affection but for two persons—herself and Sir George Villeroy, whose attentions on her

first entering the world had seemed to vacillate between her and his first wife, Lady Julia Mordaunt; therefore, however she might caress the poor Julia, she, in her heart, disliked her, as the child of the woman whom she had always envied, and who had, she thought, robbed her of her lover, and also, as a rival in Sir George's affection. But when the point was gained, the mask was thrown off, and Sir George soon discovered that the child, who, till the age of ten years, had been used to unlimited indulgence, would now be curtailed of what he considered as even necessary recreations, and would be under the rigid control, of a severe task-master. At first parental affection urged him to interfere, but indolence, increasing indolence, forced him to acquiesce—as he could not but own that his best friends had told him he was spoiling Julia, and Lady Villeroy was continually assuring him that all her severity was intended for the child's good; there were other beings yet unborn, for whose welfare Lady Villeroy was equally solici-

tous—namely, her own future progeny; and while she was constantly, though vainly, imagining that a male heir would in due time be born to the house of Villeroy, she was always talking of the necessity of curtailing all unnecessary expences, in order to be provided for the maintenance of the large family which she might one day have; and poor Sir George found only, too late, that he had better have retrenched, and remained single, than have given up his usual enjoyments, and his liberty of action also. But it was easier to yield than to resist, and as his lady did not abridge him of his usual quantity of wine, or his nap after dinner, he tried to forget that no servants would stay in his family, because they had not enough to eat, and to think that Lady Villeroy was right in resolving to give a useful, rather than a fashionable education to his daughter; on this system she hired a governess for Julia who undertook to teach her grammar and needle-work only, and enough of the French language to enable

her to teach it to her little brothers and sisters when they should arrive. At their leisure hours the governess and Julia were expected to assist Lady Villeroy in working for the family, knitting rugs, bed-side carpets, and so forth. Lady Villeroy being what is commonly called a notable managing woman, and some persons more just than elegant, used to bestow on her the common, vulgar appellation of a nip, or a skin-flint—that is an avaricious, mean woman. Hitherto poor Julia had slept in the largest room on the second floor, both in the town and country house; but now that room was to be set apart for a nursery, and she and the governess, a well-born woman, "whose poverty, but not her will," consented to be an inmate of this establishment, were obliged to sleep in a small and almost unwholesome room adjoining. The dress, too, of Julia underwent a gradual, but complete metamorphosis; Julia was inclined to be both tall and fat for her age; and on pretence of tightening her into a proper shape, the child wore

high stiff stays, so narrow in front that the fine open chest, which nature gave her, was wholly obscured; her shoulders thrown up in an unhealthy and ungraceful manner; while her mother-in-law was often lamenting how shockingly ill-made, and how very high shouldered her poor dear Julia was; then, her hair was represented as having such a tendency to be dirty, that it was necessary it should be cut close to her head; and those luxuriant auburn ringlets, which had once been the pride of both her parents, were so completely annihilated as soon as Lady Villeroy assumed her reign, that Sir George could not help stamping his foot with vexation, and almost muttering an oath when he first beheld the change; indeed, Julia was at length so completely altered by want of her accustomed exercise and recreation, by her ugly dress, and her cropped hair, that the likeness to her mother, which made her odious to Lady Villeroy because it endeared her to Sir George, was entirely annihilated; and

the mortified father used to exclaim, when Julia made her low and awkward curtsey at the door, as she left the room, "Well, I am so disappointed, I really believe that girl will make a plain woman after all;" and he retained this opinion even when Julia had attained her fifteenth year; though he could not help declaring, even in her presence, spite of the frown of his wife, that she was at least a fine grown girl, though very narrow chested and high shouldered. No wonder, as spite of her rapid growth the poor girl was forced to wear her frocks two years, till they became at length so short, that decency as well as grace were violated in her appearance; but Lady Villeroy was at length urged to bestow a deep flounce on these old habiliments, by the jealous pain which an observation of Sir George's occasioned her.

"Really, my dear," said he, "Julia's petticoats would be frightfully short were it not for the excessive beauty of her feet and ankles, which remind me forcibly of her poor mother."

Jealousy immediately conquered avarice, and Julia and Miss Brightwen, the governess, were desired to lengthen the frocks with all possible expedition. Meanwhile, though Julia's mind and talents remained uncultivated, her heart and her temper were in a state of progressive improvement. The temper of few children, who had been indulged in all their wishes till the age of ten, could have escaped utter destruction when such indulgence was succeeded by severity and privations; but as Julia's temper was so good that it had not been much injured, even by pernicious indulgence, it was enabled to resist the nearly as fatal power of severity, by the counteraction which the influence of the governess proved to that of the mother. Sophia Brightwen had known better days—and fortune smiled deceitful in her birth. Her father, soon after her good and pious mother was taken from him, was so embarrassed by his own extravagance that he was found to sell his estates; with what remained after his debts were paid, he

entered into a business in which he only just escaped bankruptcy, and, like Sir George Villeroy, had been induced to marry for money; but unlike Sir George he speculated with the money thus obtained, which so irritated the temper of his wife, that his children could not live in the house with her, and he himself was obliged to own that it was necessary they must try to maintain themselves; accordingly, his daughters were forced to leave home, and the elder was induced to marry for a maintenance, and became miserable and indigent for life; the younger, Sophia, was glad to accept the situation of governess to Julia Villeroy, with a scanty salary, and on conditions which pride and avarice only could have imposed, and desponding poverty have accepted.

But Sophia bore her lot with unrepining patience; she had early learned to cast her cares on her Creator, and when her father proved a beggar, and her lover, in consequence of it, forsook her, and married a richer maiden, Sophia remembered

there was one in heaven who loved her; and she learned at length to smile amidst her sorrows. When she became an inmate of Sir George Villeroy's house, she felt great sympathy with the situation of poor Julia.

Julia, like herself, was the object of a mother-in-law's tyranny and dislike, and she endeavoured by her affectionate soothings to heal the wounded feelings of the irritated and suffering girl. She told her also the story of her own sorrows, and while Julia listened to it, she saw in it such a resemblance to her own distress, that the relater naturally became endeared to her, and she was always impatient when the few hours in a day which she passed in Lady Villeroy's apartments became fewer; and fewer they very soon became, as Lady Villeroy said Sir George's frequent attacks of the gout made him unable to bear the excitement of the presence even of his own child. Julia had loved her father tenderly, and she loved him still; but as she was now forbidden the usual testimonies of his fondness, her pleasure in being with him

was destroyed, and she found the society of her governess a refuge. Soon also it became a blessing to her, for the simple, unobtrusive, but heart-felt piety which enabled Miss Brightwen to endure with cheerful patience the hardships of her lot, was not lost upon the sensitive mind of her pupil; even though her governess could not teach her accomplishments, she was able to instruct her in those truths, without which all other teaching is vain, and thus enabled her to bear the "crook in her lot" with humble resignation.

Yet, though Julia was denied the means of learning either music or drawing, her talents for them shewed and indulged themselves in spite of all opposition; her room was decorated with cheap prints, on which she expended part of her small allowance, and which she endeavoured to copy in her few moments of leisure from her heavy tasks of working for the indulgence of Lady Villeroy's necessities, fancies, or parsimony; and the face of Miss Brightwen, in various views,

was to be seen in every part of the room, ill-drawn indeed, but so like as to shew that her talent for drawing was worthy of cultivation. At dusk, both the governess and the pupil might be seen leaning out of their window, listening with eager delight to the hand-organ playing in the adjacent square, and there was not a tune on the barrel which Julia could not sing by heart, almost as soon as she heard it, and with which she did not make vocal the fields round her father's mansion in the country, when she was sure that no echo could bring it to the ear of Lady Villeroy. But this was a pleasure of which she was now entirely deprived, for as there was a degree of hospitality and generous living requisite to Sir George's situation in life in the country, which did not suit the narrow spirit and saving ways of Lady Villeroy, she contrived to alarm Sir George's fear for his health so much, that she made him think it dangerous for him to remove from the immediate vicinity of his London physician and their house in Gloucester-

place became at length their only residence. Consequently, as Lady Villeroy could not, or would not spare a footman to walk behind Miss Villeroy and her governess, and she had been told by persons of whose opinion she stood in awe, that Julia was too tall and womanly to walk without one, the garden in Portman-square was the boundary of poor Julia's walk, and those cheeks which had glowed with the roses of health while she could enjoy the air and exercise of the country, now became pale and lifeless from confinement at her needle, and from want of relaxation and exertion. At length, however, the governess and pupil obtained leave to walk out for an hour or two before breakfast toward the Regent's Park, and by their rapid pace, the prisoners always endeavoured to make as much of this opportunity as possible. One morning as they were going along this favourite road, they heard a hand-organ at a distance, and Julia could not resist her inclination to follow it, in order to listen to it more at

her ease than she had hitherto done; in vain her governess was representing to her that she was going too far, when, at this moment a dog of a very suspicious appearance came staggering along the road, and Miss Brightwen catching hold of Julia's arm, pulled her forcibly back, exclaiming, "that dog is mad, let us get over this gate instantly!" but before Julia could reach the gate, retreating backwards for the greater safety, the dog directed his steps towards her, and was on the very point of springing on her, when a gentleman, who was passing in a gig, jumped out, and seizing the animal by the nape of the neck, held him struggling in his grasp, conjuring Julia to climb over the gate instantly lest the animal should get loose; but Miss Brightwen vainly attempted to persuade her to go further than the top bar of the gate. She saw the evident danger of her preserver, whose hold of the dog grew every moment weaker, and she could not stir from the spot, but remained motionless in fearful expectation of the

consequences. At length some men who had been sent in pursuit of the dog, came up, threw a noose over his neck, and saved the gentleman from a fate which became unavoidable; and he was turning to speak to Julia, when, on looking round, he saw that his horse had burst from the hold of his groom, and was running down the road dragging his gig against the hedge, and in momentary danger of overturning it. Accordingly, he immediately joined in the pursuit himself, and soon disappeared from their view. But Julia continued to gaze after him, indulging a hope he would return, till Miss Brightwen insisted on her setting off for home immediately, or they would be too late for breakfast, and they should not be allowed to walk out again. Julia reluctantly complied, the more so, because the men who had pursued the dog, and others who had joined them, were loud in praise of the gentleman's intrepidety in seizing so powerful an animal at the evident risk of his own life. "He is a gallant fellow, I know," said one of

the men, " I forget his name, he is a captain in the navy, and some lord's son :" but Julia, though willing to linger still to listen to this conversation, was urged forward when another man said, " Well my dear, he saved your life, that is a sure thing, and I do not wonder you look so pale and so frightful, nor that other person neither, shall I give you an arm ?" This offer they civilly, but hastily declined, and with tottering, but rapid steps they returned to Gloucester-place. When they arrived they luckily reached their own apartment unquestioned; but the terror which Miss Brightwen had undergone, on Julia's account, threw her into a fainting fit, which put Lady Villeroy to the expence of so much hartshorn and sal volatile, that she declared they should never go out of the garden into the square again. A sad hearing for Julia, who had secretly resolved to go every morning to the same spot, being more alive to the hope of seeing her preserver than to the fear of meeting another mad dog.

Miss Brightwen thought the hope more unfounded than the fear, and was not sorry that, for the present at least, their morning ramble was forbidden; and, for the first time, Julia found her governess not disposed to sympathise in her feelings. "But, you forget, surely, that he saved my life, and how ungrateful I must be not to wish to see him again!" was Julia's constant reply, when Miss Brightwen disapproved her desire of revisiting the scene of her danger; however, Julia was always appeased, when she readily owned that, as far as her fright allowed her to judge, the gentleman was tall and handsome, and of his courage there could be no doubt: "Who knows," she used to add, and that always made her peace, "who knows, but you may see him one day when you least expect it." But Sophia soon found that Julia had little pleasure in talking on any other subject, and that she seemed to dwell with never ceasing satisfaction on the remembrance of this only marked event in her life.

This circumstance alarmed the conscientious governess; for, as she was not at all aware that Julia had ever read books which treated on the subject of love and adventures, she began to fear that she had herself prepared her young heart to receive this strong and, perhaps, dangerous impression, by telling her the history of her own unfortunate attachment. Her acquaintance with her lover had first begun, in his having saved her from an enraged cow; and she had once given her a detail of all her love, all her injuries; but then it was only once, as he was married, and even to think of him was become criminal; still, it had been once too much, for the conversation had made an indelible impression on its hearer: as, before he married his second wife, her father had allowed her to read whatever his library contained, and though she was only ten years old, the ideas of love, of lovers, first-sight attachment, and adventures, faded away from it again for want of being renewed, had not the chances of life presented the real

heroine of a love affair to her in the form of Sophia Brightwen. There, before her eyes, she beheld a love-lorn maid, telling a tale of faithful and hopeless attachment, weeping too as she told it, and looking interesting beyond all description: this reality was far more dangerous than any fiction could have been; and, while Julia listened to the story with many a trickling tear, the governess imputed her sorrow to sympathy alone, unconscious that even her grief made her the object of envy to her young companion, and that she wished to have a lover, a tender grief, an adventure, and a confidante; and as the story of her love had not long been confided to Julia, when the alarm in the Regent's Park took place, there was an adventure, a young and handsome deliverer, and, perhaps, a lover! at least there was an object to love, and Julia believed she loved—but though she tried to be very unhappy, certainly sighed deeply and audibly; she eat heartily, slept well, and grew fat, in spite of her wounded heart. Still she certainly thought too

much of her preserver, but she was beginning to admit, that he was probably married, for Miss Brightwen was continually saying that she might never see him again; that it was very evident he was not much interested in them, or he would have returned to enquire how they did after he had caught his horse, and as this last observation had more weight than the others, Julia was beginning to talk, and even to think less of the generous unknown, when a new event in her life promised to obliterate the remembrance of it entirely.

CHAP. II.

Lady Julia Villeroy (Julia's mother) was the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Beltravers; and the countess, on the death of her first husband, married the Earl of Pakenham, who was a widower, and, as well as herself, had an only daughter;—these children grew up with the most affectionate regard for each other; in process of time one of them married Sir George Villeroy, and the other Lord Stanmore, afterwards Earl of Erpingham; their friendship continued unimpaired till the death of Lady Julia Villeroy; and Lady Helena Fortescue, the daughter of Lady Erpingham, who was only some months, older than Julia, was her frequent playfellow, and the guest of her mother. The children also were accustomed to call each other's mother aunt, and their husbands' uncle, though no relationship subsisted

between them; but affection loves to make ties as close as it possibly can, and Lady Villeroy and Lady Erpingham loved to address each other by the name of sister; they were also pleased to be addressed by their children in the language of near kindred, while they delighted to behold the affection which subsisted between them. But when Lady Julia died, and Sir George married again, all frequent intercourse between the families ceased, and Julia and Lady Helena met no more, for Lady Villeroy always remembered that the latter was an indulged and high-spirited child, therefore not a suitable companion for her already too much petted daughter-in-law, and every invitation to Erpingham-place was peremptorily forbidden. This refusal distressed Lady Erpingham, and enraged Lady Helena; but the latter could not forget the companion of her happy childhood, and as Lady Helena and her father were coming to London unexpectedly on business, after an uninterrupted residence there of some years in

the country, on account of Lady Erpingham's ill health, which made country air necessary to preserve her life. Lord Erpingham wrote a letter to Sir George, to announce his intention of calling on him very soon, accompanied by his daughter.

"What, is this, Lord Erpingham coming to London on business for a few days, and meaning to call on me!" cried Sir George as he perused the letter: "Lady Villeroy, we must write and ask them to come hither."

"Come hither!" not for the world!" she replied, turning pale with apprehension; "consider the state of your health, my love; that rude, spoiled girl would riot you to death in a day."

"Nonsense! she is a young woman now, and, I dare say, is as quiet as Julia—they must come hither, indeed; remember our near connexion, my poor wife was no relation at all to the Erpingham's."

"That is all stuff, Sir George, let them go to the hotel—they can afford it,

and we have not a house fit to receive lords and ladies, and servants fit to cook for and wait on them."

"Then, why have we not, Lady Villeroy?" said Sir George, with more than his usual spirit.

"Why not? because we cannot afford it to be sure, and lay by what we ought of our income for unforeseen emergencies." She no longer dared to say, as she used to do, "for the sake of younger children," as they, though foreseen, were certainly not now likely to be really seen.

"Nonsense!" cried Sir George, petulantly, "what emergencies have we to dread now that ought to prevent me from opening my house to an old friend!"

"An old friend, Sir George, is one thing, but a peer of the realm is another."

"'Sdeath! madam, do you mean to say a lord cannot be a friend? what do you mean, madam, with your mysterious objections?"

"I mean that a lord cannot be entertained as easily and cheaply as a friend who is not noble."

"Cheaply! I do not want any friend of mine to be so entertained at my house, Lady Villeroy, and I shall write to tell them."

"They cannot come hither," she replied coldly and firmly, "for it is utterly impossible! The hangings of the best bed are taken down and papered up. The next best bed is down, posts and all; we have but one house-maid, and, in short, it is impossible."

Sir George was silenced for awhile, though not convinced by this reasoning, as an upholsterer could soon restore the beds to their original state. Another servant might be hired, and dinners could be procured from an hotel. But he had now acquired such a habit of yielding, and he was so pleased, so flattered, when Lady Villeroy replied to his expostulations by bursting into tears, and throwing her fine arms round his neck, assuring him all she

did was to preserve his precious life, for she knew if Lord Erpingham came to the house, he would drink himself into a fit of the gout in the stomach, that at length she reconciled him to her views, and he allowed her to write the following letter to the earl under his dictation :—

MY DEAR LORD,

It gives me the greatest pleasure to think I shall see you so soon; but I am grieved to my very soul to be unable to invite you and your charming daughter, Lady Helena, to take up your abode with us. But Lady Villeroy, whose hand I am forced to borrow to write this, and my physicians, are of opinion that my health is not strong enough to admit of any visitors, and that the more dear they are, the worse for me, as I am unable to bear any excitement, and that of the affections less than any other; so that even my daughter Julia's company I am not able often to enjoy. But I shall indulge myself in an hour's conversation with you, and

am always, my dear lord, with affectionate regards to your countess and family,

Your's, very truly,

G. Villeroy.

Lady Villeroy's best compliments.

This letter occasioned poor Sir George many a deep sigh, and a strong expression of regret; but no doubt Lady Villeroy and the physicians knew best, and the letter was sent. But he could not forget the privation, to think he was obliged to submit, and when Julia came in with the dessert as usual, that is, came to eat some of the musty raisins, old cakes, and often unripe fruit, which Lady Villeroy called a dessert, and to drink half a glass of home-made wine; her father could not help telling her how sorry he was that he was too ill to invite Lord Erpingham and Lady Helena Fortescue to the house to stay during their approaching visit to London.

"To London!" cried Julia, thrown off her guard by this news and almost screaming

with delight, "are they coming to London! and shall I see my uncle and cousin?"

"Nonsense! No more your uncle and cousin than they are mine," cried Lady Villeroy.

"But the child has been always used to call them so."

"Then it is high time, Sir George, she should learn to leave off such unbecoming pride, and conceit, and vulgarity."

"Yes, child, yes; Lord Erpingham and Lady Helena Fortescue will be here next week."

"Oh, how glad I am!" cried Julia, but tears were in her eyes.

Sir George, resenting the harsh reproof which had occasioned them, called her to him, and was going to give her a much warmer kiss than usual, when she unfortunately trod on his worst foot, and he could not help pushing her away, as he uttered an exclamation of pain. This was enough to occasion Julia's instant banishment; and the long-suppressed tears now trickled down her cheeks, and declaring

her father had not spirits strong enough to bear the sight of weeping ladies, she was dismissed to her apartment, in spite of Sir George's intercession; but she carried with her the hope that she should soon see her cousin, and was consoled. Lord and Lady Erpingham, their daughter, and their second son, were sitting together, when Sir George's letter arrived.

"Well," said Lord Erpingham, smiling, "does it contain an invitation or not?"

"I think it does," said the countess.

"It ought to do so," said Captain Fortescue.

"And would," cried Lady Helena, "if Lady Villeroy were not his wife."

"Do not be so severe and hasty in your judgment," replied her mother; "what do you know of Lady Villeroy?"

"No good, mamma. But pray read the letter, papa; I see it makes you smile, but not with pleasure."

"Read it aloud, Helena. Just what I expected. Well, but what harm is there

in this letter, my dear? If Sir George b too ill to receive company, that is not Lady Villeroy's fault."

"But is he so?"

"Why should you doubt it? Why doubt his word? I am sure if the physician disapproved Lord Erpingham's having guests at his house, I should forbid them coming. Indeed, you are unjust to poor Lady Villeroy."

"There, that is so like my mother," said Lady Helena, "always making excuses for every one. The other day she was reading Paradise Lost, and, to my great amusement, she began to make excuses for the devil, and called him poor fellow; therefore no wonder she feels so kindly towards his true and lineal descendant."

"Helena, for shame."

"Nay, mamma, in the height and ancienty of the founder of the family, Lady Villeroy would forgive his nature; for you know she is always labouring to prove her family higher than that of my dear aunt

Villeroy, who, living or dead, is equally the object of her envy and jealousy."

"Really, Helena, you are too severe," cried her father; and I am sorry your mother's example is so thrown away on you."

"Her example is not thrown away on me papa; it operates too forcibly. Mamma is so over-candid, that she makes me the contrary. But I will say no more about Lady Villeroy, I will content myself with commenting on uncle Villeroy's letter."

"Better tear that in pieces than his wife's character, Helena."

"Thank you, brother; and, thus authorised, I begin.—'Sincerest pleasure to think I shall see you.' That's true, I dare say;—'and he is grieved, no doubt, not to be able, that is, not to dare to invite us to the house. Charming daughter! that is, of course—physicians think——Pho—Lady Villeroy thinks she is prime doctor and blister-plaister too—can't bear the excitement of the affections, "and so he rarely sees Julia! oh, the odious cunning

of that paragraph! a palpable excuse for the neglect which we shall find the dear girl suffering under:—her father cannot bear her presence. There peeps out the cloven foot;—now, mamma, if you can make an excuse for this maratre."

"Helena, do not call names! the excuse is an obvious one, her husband's ill health; though, I own it is strange, that parents should not always be the better for the company of their children."

"Strange, indeed," cried Lady Helena, throwing her arms round her mother's neck, "there spoke thy own maternal heart, and I do not believe the truth of any part of the letter; do you, papa? do you, Marcus? Mamma, you know, believes every thing, and has money and food still for every mountainous woman that comes to the hall-door; though so many have been safely delivered of pillows and bolsters at the Park gates."

"Saucy girl! but I believe you are right, and that the baronet's lady did not choose to be at the expense of entertain-

ing us;—well, he deserves all he meets with—but that poor dear orphan, Julia; now, my lord and lady, hear my proposal, which is, that we carry off Julia, and bring her back with us."

"The very thing we always intended, my dear," said the countess, "how tenderly I loved her poor mother! and my heart yearns towards this poor girl, who is, I am told, much neglected, and passes her time chiefly with an amiable but incompetent governess."

"Yes; and she is quite a woman now, nearly my age;—she is seventeen and upwards!—why do you laugh, Marcus?"

"To think what a contrast this tyrannised over, and neglected girl exhibits to you, Helena—you, the petted, the spoiled, and the loved of all hearts. Poor thing! do not let her come hither, it will only teach her to feel more severely the misery of her own situation."

"Well then, Marcus, if you feel so much for the misery of her situation, do

not let her go back any more, but give her another home."

Captain Fortescue started, and changed colour, as Lady Helena said this; then giving her a look of melancholy reproof, he suddenly left the room.

"There, Helena! see how you have wounded your brother's feelings," cried Lord Erpingham; "I wish you would think before you speak."

"I did, papa, and therefore I spoke; I meant what I said, believe me."

"But you know it is a subject Marcus cannot bear to be joked upon."

"Nor did I joke; surely, two years is long enough for any spirited man to wear the willow; and, for the sake of a coquetish jilt, is he to renounce marriage, and insist on no one's naming love to him?"

"But, my dear, I know you did not mean to wound his feelings; still you should remember his excessive sensibility."

"Indeed, dear mamma, I cannot help

suspecting, when regret and misery of this nature last so long, that there is a little temper mixed with them—and I want to cure Marcus of these fancies, instead of indulging him in them."

"Temper! Helena! oh, no—it is all feeling, and wounded affection."

"Aye, so you tell him, mamma, and he thinks, therefore, it is amiable to grieve; and so it might be, if he had lost by death a beloved wife or mistress; but so to pine for a heartless wretch, who forsook him almost at the altar for a large jointure; it is not to be endured, and—O dear! there he goes, with folded arms, and looking so sad! I am very sorry now that I said what I did; I must go and make it up with him."

So saying, the affectionate girl went in pursuit of her brother, and, in a short time, they returned arm in arm to the house, though the traces of tears still lingered on the glowing cheek of Lady Helena. Julia, meanwhile, was anticipating with great delight, the pleasure of

seeing Lady Helena Fortescue, little thinking that she was to be invited to return with her to her happy home; such a possibility would have almost rendered her wild with joy; as it was, she found herself unable to pay undivided attention to any thing she did; and whenever she was alone with her governess, she could talk of nothing but Lady Helena, and wonder how she looked, and what she wore: and then the poor thing cast a mournful eye on her own beggarly and old-fashioned wardrobe, to which her mother-in-law, in expectation of Lady Helena's arrival, had added a chintz gown, of a large running pattern, which had been one of the wedding gowns of the first Lady Villeroy's mother, and was now made up with long sleeves, and lengthened by a scant, single flounce of muslin, in order to serve as an afternoon gown for Julia. But, used as Julia was to excessive frugality and the absence of all smartness in her attire, she could not endure the idea of wearing this unusual and old-fashioned dress; but she

was forced to submit to her fate; and though Miss Brightwen assisted her to the utmost in endeavours to improve the rest of her apparel, Julia found that all she could do was to arm herself with patience and humility to the mortifications which her vanity must endure during her young companion's visit.

"But, if she loves me, you know Miss Brightwen, she will not care about my dress," was the oft repeated observation to her affectionate auditor; and the "No to be sure not," her constant reply, was ever welcome, and was at length relied upon; meanwhile, Lady Helena was eagerly anticipating the journey to London; for, having learned to consider Julia Villeroy as the object of her mother-in-law's cruelty and ill usage, her young and generous heart could not rest until she had endeavoured to rescue her awhile from her power.

Lady Helena had considerable powers of mind and an almost intuitive perception of character; and knowledge of human na-

ture, but her feelings were often too strong for her judgment, and her earnest wish to do right, sometimes precipitated her into acting wrong, and led her to mar the cause which she wished to render successful. With the usual rashness and self-confidence of gifted youth, she had a dangerous contempt for the restrictions of worldly prudence, and the usages of society; and as her mother's delicate health had obliged her to consign her from the age of eight to sixteen, to the care of a fond and injudicious grand-mother, Lady Helena, used to command, and taught to believe that her eccentricities were the proofs and the inspirations of genius, was only too apt to act in defiance of salutary caution, and to fancy because her intentions were right, that her mode of executing them could not be wrong. Lady Erpingham beheld her and all her actions with eyes of unqualified admiration; but to Lord Erpingham and her brothers, she was an object of anxiety, as well as love; and they frequently found it necessary to warn the young enthusiast,

that wounding the self-love of those she meant to amend, was not the way to reform them, and that by acting in opposition to the prejudices of the world she might injure herself without benefiting others. Such was the noble girl who now set off for the metropolis with her father, with a heart full of love and pity for the poor Julia, and of virtuous indignation against her mean maratre, as she persisted to call her; and Captain Fortescue thought it expedient to warn her, that if she wished to carry her point, and induce Lady Villeroy to consent to let Julia return with her, she must take care not to let that lady see that she considered herself as a female knight-errant, come to rescue a fair damsel from the castle of a cruel and unrelenting ogress. Lady Helena bore this advice with great sweetness, because she felt its propriety, and she resolved to put a restraint on her feelings for the sake of carrying the point on which her heart was set. Lord and Lady Erpingham had thought it most advisable that she should write to Lady Vil-

leroy, and express her wishes to take Julia back with her, that she might be prepared for leaving home; but Lady Helena, who perfectly knew the character of the lady in question, thought she was most likely to succeed if no time was given for preparation, as in the latter case Julia's wardrobe could not be replenished, and the mother-in-law would have an excuse for not expending money on the daughter-in-law.

"Surely, my dear," said Lord Erpingham, as they went along, "it would have been better for you to have written to express your wish of taking Julia back with you."

"Indeed you are mistaken, papa," she replied; "believe me, I know Lady Villeroy, and I am very sorry that prudence will oblige me to conceal that knowledge from her."

"Prudence! Helena, is that virtue of your acquaintance?"

"She has at present only left her card for me, I own; but on this occasion I mean to call on her for a long visit I assure

you; but there is St. Paul's, and in another half hour or so, I shall see this poor, dear girl, and my uncle Villeroy."

As Lord Erpingham always intended to drive to Sir George Villeroy's immediately on coming to town, he had appointed a person to meet him there, who wanted to speak to him on business; and from this person the family in Gloucester Place learned of the approaching arrival of their visitors.

Lady Villeroy imparted the news to Julia on her way to her toilet.

"Pray, mamma, what shall I put on?" asked the fluttered girl.

"Your chintz to be sure," was the answer; and with a heavy heart she obeyed.

CHAP. III.

Lady Villeroy began the task of dressing with much more alacrity, for variety was in her the only passion powerful enough to conquer avarice; and as she was with reason proud of her person, and remembered that Lord Erpingham had often pronounced her to be a very fine woman, she had taken care to bespeak a fashionable, and becoming morning and evening dress against the time of his visit; the latter, as it was near their usual time of dinner, she now put on, not only on that account, but because an evening dress gave her a better opportunity of displaying her charms, and would lead Lord Erpingham perhaps to exclaim when he saw her, "Really, Lady Villeroy, I do not see that you are a day older since I saw you last!" probably the morning dress would have been more likely to secure this flattering

exclamation; but Lady Villeroy thought otherwise; and while her dowdy-looking, and ill-dressed daughter-in-law awaited the arrival of her noble visitor, with mortified vanity, and consciously unbecoming attire, Lady Villeroy entered the drawing-room so tastefully arrayed, and full of such conscious elegance and beauty, that Sir George beheld his wife with pride and admiration, but almost turned away with mortification and dislike from the contrast exhibited by Julia and her dress. Kinder feelings however instantly returned, when he reflected, that if he felt mortified, Julia's mortification in being obliged to wear such unbecoming apparel must be far greater; and calling Julia to him by the name of dear child, he imprinted a kiss on her pale cheek, and in no conciliating tone, desired to know why Lady Villeroy had dressed the poor girl in such an odious and disgusting gown. Lady Villeroy said it was an expensive, handsome chintz gown, and that large patterns were the fashion.

"But why do you make her wear that

ugly tippet and handkerchief always, as if she had deformities and disease to hide?"

"Because it would be indecent for her to go uncovered at her time of life, Sir George."

"Humph!" replied he, shrugging his shoulders and casting a sarcastic and meaning look at the uncovered shoulders and displayed person of Lady Villeroy, "What, I suppose elderly ladies alone are privileged to be indecent now a days."

Lady Villeroy did not reply; she was speechless with alarm and surprize! What was the matter with Sir George? It was evident that Julia was gaining favour and she losing it! a hateful insinuating creature! once she had caught her, lately, adjusting his pillow, and mixing wine and water for him when she had gone out; and another day she had found her reading aloud to him! It was time, then, that this dear child, who had been the means of drawing from him the only sarcasm on herself which she had yet heard, should be removed awhile from his presence, and go she should on some pretence or another.

" Yes," said she to herself, " if Lord Erpingham asks her to return with him, go she shall, though I had rather she should go any where else; but then, she can go thither for nothing, and the suddenness of her departure will be an excuse for her not having more and better clothes; and as she has a monstrous appetite, her board will be no small saving.—How right were the conjectures of Lady Helena!"

Lady Villeroy was not mistaken—Julia was gaining, and she losing ground in his favour.

The tyrant sometimes carries his abuse of power so far, that the meanest slaves are at length rouzed into resistance, and it was the case in this instance.

In former days Sir George had valued himself on his hospitality, and still more upon his family—a family so ancient, and so noble, that he conceived himself the equal of any peer of the realm, whose descent was of less antiquity. Lady Villeroy had mortified his feelings on both these points, and had forbidden him the indulgence of

one of them; she had positively refused to let him entertain Lord Erpingham as his guest, and had also declared that their house and establishment were not fit to receive and entertain persons of such high rank! Mean and grovelling idea! an acknowledgment of inferiority which his proud heart disdained. Then, his daughter, his heiress, dressed like any thing but a young lady, he thought, in a gown that looked as if made out of a bed-curtain, while no pains or expense were spared by her mother-in-law to decorate her own person! Sir George was indignant, more and more, the more that he reflected on his lady's conduct;—while her love of saving had not wounded his pride and his vanity, he was contented not to interfere; but now that she had invaded both, in his own and his daughter's person, he felt a strong determination to throw off the yoke she had imposed on him, and to open his doors again with all his wonted hospitality; a good night, and the consciousness of perfect health at that moment contri-

buted not a little to make him thus determined and thus energetic; and while he spoke to Lady Villeroy in a cold, peevish tone, and with averted eyes, but caught Julia fondly to his bosom, and gazed on her with an expression of tender recollection, as if in her he fancied that he beheld her mother, his alarmed wife trembled for her threatened power, and could only keep up her spirits to go through the expected visit with proper energy, by looking at herself in the glass, and thinking, with delighted expectation, how much Lord Erpingham would admire her. There was a silent spectator of all that passed, who was by no means an unobservant, and an uninterested one, namely, Miss Brightwen—and she augured favourably from what she saw, for the future interests of her beloved pupil. But if they led to nothing further, tokens of affection from a father were precious to a child; and Sophia beheld with pleasure the pale cheek of Julia, gradually overspread with a becoming glow, the result of pleasing emotion at

receiving notice so unusual, and in the presence of her mother-in-law. Miss Brightwen had been desired to attend Julia into the drawing-room on this occasion, not only because Julia had earnestly solicited it, but because Lady Villeroy thought the dowdy-looking governess, as well as the awkward daughter-in-law would prove an excellent foil to her charms. But there her self-love deceived her; she had too little mind, and too little of that discriminating taste which mind, and mind alone, bestows, to appreciate the unobtrusive attractions of Sophia Brightwen. A handsome and young face seen from under a very old looking mob cap, as if its wearer had resigned all pretensions to youth and beauty—with the illusions of wealth and happiness; a slender, but finely rounded form, shrouded in a double muslin handkerchief and a white gown, the only white gown she was possessed of, and which she persevered in wearing on this occasion, spite of Lady Villeroy's hints, that she wondered any but rich people should ever

wear white dresses as they cost so much washing, constituted the appearance and the garb of Sophia Brightwen—the latter affording a strong evidence of her propriety of feelings, and simplicity of character; and even Lady Villeroy could not help owning, as she observed how well the long black eye-lashes and the full-black eye-brow of Sophia set off the dazzling whiteness of her skin, and the expression of her long Asiatic eye, that really, in some views of her face, the dowdy girl was handsome.

At length the well-known liveries were recognised, and an open barouche and four drove up to the door. Sir George, obeying the impulse of his heart, limped to the head of the stairs to meet his old friend, and welcome Lady Helena; while Julia, rendered more than commonly awkward and bashful by emotion, got as far as possible from the door, and hid herself behind Miss Brightwen, who anxiously expected the entrance of Lady Helena, being eager to judge by her countenance

and manner, whether her hopes, that she would be a friend to her beloved pupil, and produce a favourable change in her joyless existence, were likely to be realized. Lady Helena entered with a cold and proud air, and suffered with evident unwillingness the salute and insincere welcome of the lady of the house; with a cold and still haughty eye she glanced over the now alarmed Sophia, but when she caught a view of her whom she sought, her countenance lighted up with pleasure and affection, and clasping Julia in her arms, she called her her dear Julia, her dear cousin, and expressed her delight at seeing her. Miss Brightwen was satisfied; a smile played on her expressive lip, and a tear darted to her dark eye; and when Lady Helena looked at her again it was with a very different air and manner, for she understood and admired the countenance that beamed so benignly upon her, and saying, "Your governess, I conclude, Julia?" she curtsied to her, with answering complacency. Lady Helena was, indeed, agree-

ably surprised; she had entered the house disliking, equally, Lady Villeroy and the governess, because she concluded a governess chosen by the former, and known to be deficient in fashionable accomplishments, must be odious and disagreeable; but now her quickness of perception told her she had been unjust, and that smile and that tear which came from Sophia Brightwen's heart made their instant way to her's. In the mean time Lord Erpingham was paying his compliments to Lady Villeroy, but not without casting an enquiring look towards Sophia, who was evidently not to be introduced to him. Who then could she be?—her dress was so quaint, that she might have been taken for a servant, but her manner could not be so mistaken; it had the mark of gentlewoman too strongly impressed on it, and he bowed to her as he went to meet Julia with the graceful courtesy of a man of the old school.

"Miss Brightwen, Julia's governess, papa," cried Lady Helena, and the earl bowed still lower; while the happy Julia

and Sophia exchanged looks of satisfaction.

"And is this the little Julia?" cried Lord Erpingham, holding her from him with both his hands, and gazing eagerly in her blushing face; "grown quite a woman I protest, but look up my dear, let me see your eyes,—yes," added he, with a sigh, and turning to Sir George, "it is the same sweet countenance Villeroy—that countenance which once seen can never be forgotten."

Sir George understood him; "I am glad you think so," said he, in a faltering voice.

"We see no likeness whatsoever, my lord," cried Lady Villeroy, hastily; "whatever likeness there was is gone now."

"Surely not, madam, features may change, but countenances never."

"No, to be sure," cried Lady Helena, "and Julia is still very like dear, dear aunt Villeroy."

This was wormwood to the feelings of

Lady Villeroy, and it was with difficulty she could restrain them from venting themselves in words of angry contradiction; conceal them she could not; and Lady Helena turned away with a look of such mallicious triumph at sight of her mortification, that Miss Brightwen could scarcely keep the proper degree of seriousness.

"But, my dear girl, have you a cold, or a cough, that you wear this frightful tippet?" said Lady Helena.

"Oh, no, but—"

"But, what!—do, pray take it off then;" and she was going to untie it, but Julia resisted, exclaiming, "Oh, no, I must not indeed; mamma—"

"It is my pleasure that she wears that tippet, Lady Helena."

"Then I have done—I understand you, and say no more, madam; but I hope you will allow me to go and adjust my hair after my journey."

"Certainly, but our unoccupied chambers are all in disorder—beds taken down;

but if you will excuse going into my room. Go, Miss Brightwen, and see that it is ready."

Julia accompanied her, eager to vent her glad feelings to her sympathising friend, and ask her if she did not think Lady Helena an angel?

The moment Julia disappeared, Lady Helena caught hold of Lady Villeroy's hand, and said, "Let me take advantage of Julia's absence, dear madam, to entreat that you will forgive her?"

"Forgive her!—what can your ladyship mean; do you not know—"

"Surely Julia is in disgrace, and you have thought proper to punish her by making her wear before us that odious tippet and gown; if it be not so, I beg pardon."

Lady Villeroy at first was too angry to reply; but Sir George exclaimed—"What is that you say, Lady Helena, about the gown and tippet?—I thought them monstrous queer and unbecoming myself, but my lady there said I was quite wrong, and they were all the fashion."

"I said no such thing, Sir George; but the gown was as good as new, and was worn by Miss Villeroy's betters: I think it was quite good enough for her, and I have no idea of encouraging a girl in ideas of waste and extravagance."

"It might be worn by Miss Villeroy's ancestors, madam," replied Lady Helena, proudly, "but not, I conceive, by her betters, as the daughter and heiress of Sir George and of Lady Julia Villeroy has not many betters in a worldly point of view." Then seeing the cloud grow still darker on the mother-in-law's brow, she added, in a gayer tone, "the gown may be handsome and good, and if worn by a fine graceful woman like you, Lady Villeroy, whose figure can carry any thing off, might appear to advantage; but my poor little unmade outré cousin looks in it as if she had been forced to fly from a fire in the night, and had wrapped herself up in one of the bed curtains."

"There," exclaimed Sir George, "I said your gown looked like a bed."

"Helena, you are very saucy, and I do not think even Lady Villeroy's good nature can forgive you," said Lord Erpingham.

"Oh, yes—yes she will;" said Lady Helena, remembering she had a point to carry, and repenting that she could not but appear an impertinent interferer; "yes, for her own sake, she will smile on me again, because she knows she has pretty dimples, and all women you always say, papa, like to display their beauties."

This second compliment to her beauty made Lady Helena's peace, and when Julia returned to conduct her to the chamber, the frowns were succeeded by the dimples.

"Now, my dear, take me to your own chamber, not Lady Villeroy's; I would rather see your apartments than her's," said Lady Helena.

"My—my apartments!—oh! they are not worth seeing, and are at the top of the house."

"No matter, I love exploring;" and Julia obeyed. They found Miss Brightwen there, not a little astonished at sight of the young and noble visitor. "How is this, Miss Villeroy; our room is not worthy to admit such company!" she exclaimed.

"It is not worthy of such occupants," replied Lady Helena.

"But which is your own chamber, Julia?"

"Oh! we have but one chamber, and this is our sitting-room."

"What! have you not a bed to yourself?—But no, I dare say not, one pair of sheets cost less than two, and economy is a virtue."

At this strange speech, from such a person, Julia, not seeing its drift, looked suprised; but Miss Brightwen, thrown off her guard, by the archness of the look which accompanied it, and by the ludicrous and exact knowledge of Lady Villeroy's chamber, which it contained, gave way to laughter, which she vainly turned away to

hide. Lady Helena instantly seized her hand, exclaiming—"Miss Brightwen, I came hither prepared to hate you, but I see that I shall doat upon you, for I find that you can laugh and cry too, and I am sure you love that little girl, and——but hush! even truth must not be spoken at all times."

"Certainly not," replied Miss Brightwen, significantly, "but I am very glad that your ladyship parts with hatred so easily."

"Not all hatreds, Miss Brightwen."

"Dear me, how could you or any one think of hating poor, dear Miss Brightwen?" cried Julia, fondly throwing her arms round her.

"Nobody that knows her would, I am sure."

"And why do you call me little Lady Helena, I am as tall as you?"

"Taller, my dear, but I call every thing little that I love."

"And do you love me?—how kind; grateful little soul; but tell me why have

you not this large room to sit in ?" throwing open a door as she spoke.

" Oh, that is the nursery."

" Nursery ! what for your boys and girls, Julia, when you marry ?"

" No; for my brothers and sisters."

" And pray where are they, my dear ?"

" No where at present; but we live in expectations of them," said Miss Brightwen, smiling.

" What—really—is there one in the way ?"

" No, certainly not; but who knows what may happen, and it is right to be prepared with a room for the reception of expected guests.

" Admirable!" cried Lady Helena, turning round on her toe, and making numberless pirouettes round the room as she always did when any thing amused or delighted her; " and so in the mean time you, my dear Julia, are to be suffocated in a little nut-shell of a room; surely you might occupy this till the brats come."

"Oh! we do walk in it sometimes, and look out of the window."

"Really; what noble daring!"

"Yes, but mamma—"

"Julia, if ever you call that woman mamma in my presence, I—Julia! I cannot bear it; I knew and loved your own real mamma, and you surely must have strangely forgotten her to be always calling Lady Villeroy by that sacred name."

"Forgotten my own dear mother! no, indeed, Lady Helena, but papa desired me to call her so, and you know I ought to obey him."

"Yes, but do not do it in my presence if you can avoid it. What an odious glass, it is not big enough for a doll to dress by," said Lady Helena, pettishly, as she turned one of her fine dark curls round her fingers—what a set out for an heiress!—oh, how I hate——" Here Lady Helena's eye met the frowning brow of Miss Brightwen, whose awe of rank was very inferior to her sense of right, and who would not

allow any one to speak disrespectfully of Lady Villeroy in her presence, or that of her daughter-in-law. Lady Helena understood and obeyed the reproof, and respected the reprover, but she indulged herself in sundry grimaces, expressive of her wonder—an indignation at the appearance of the apartments—and then taking Miss Brightwen's arm she insisted on her returning to the drawing-room to give her one of her reproving looks whenever she was inclined to behave ill; and she made her re-appearance still leaning on her arm. Lady Villeroy beheld, with frowning surprise, Lady Helena's familiarity with a person whom she herself always kept at, what she called, a proper distance; and the sight did not help to soothe the irritation of her temper, which had been considerably ruffled by the praises Lord Erpingham had bestowed not only on the beauty of Julia's countenance, but on the fine face and distinguished appearance of her governess—two beings whose personal characters she had always looked upon

with contempt, and as unlikely to attract the observation, much less the admiration of such a connoissieur in beauty as Lord Erpingham; and I believe there is no severer pang can be inflicted on a woman of great personal pretensions, and still greater vanity, especially if in the wane of her beauty, than to hear encomiums on the personal charms of those whom she has always considered as inferior to herself—no matter how near the person so applauded, whether it be a sister, a niece, or even a daughter; indeed the more frequent and immediate the competition, the greater is the jealousy, and often the dislike; nor could she entirely restrain and conceal her feelings, for, with a tone of pique, she said, "I see that your ladyship soon makes acquaintance—I believe you never saw Julia's governess before."

"No, madam," she replied, "never; but as there is often love at first sight, why not friendship at first sight?—I think this lady capable of inspiring it."

"Dear! how romantic Lady Helena!

I think you do Miss Brightwen a great deal of honor."

Lady Helena was going to answer her, and, perhaps, in no conciliating manner, had she not been interrupted by Julia's approaching her with an eager and blushing countenance, as if she had something very interesting and important to say to her, but her courage failed her; she then put her arm through Lady Helena's, who allowed her to lead her to a seat; Julia wanted to say, "Then do you believe in love at first sight?"—but her conscious heart restrained the tell-tale question, and when she heard her mother-in-law's "how romantic," she was very glad that she had not spoken.

Sir George now asked if Lady Villeroy had not ordered refreshments.

"To be sure I have," she replied, in no gentle tone; and the butler at that moment made his appearance with chocolate and its appurtenances.

"None for me," said Lady Helena; but she eagerly seized on some of the

slender pieces of toasted bread, and ate them with strong marks of hunger. Lord Erpingham also refused the chocolate, but took the cake which accompanied it. To Miss Brightwen and Julia nothing was handed; but the servant having offered it to his mistress, set the tray on the table.

"You have no chocolate, madam," said Lord Erpingham, kindly, who had seen with generous indignation the neglect of the servant, which he attributed to the mistress; "will you allow me to offer you some?" taking a cup as he spoke.

"Miss Brightwen is bilious, my lord, she must not drink chocolate," said Lady Villeroy hastily; and Sophia, thanking him more by a look than by words, declined the offered cup.

Sir George who had seen, with mortification and surprise, chocolate enter when he expected a substantial luncheon for persons who had travelled thirty miles, now rose, and hobbled towards Lady Villeroy; "Why did you not order—" was all that Lady Helena overheard him say, but she saw

that Lady Villeroy resisted his proposal, whatever it was.

The keenly-feeling girl could no longer restrain her indignant impertinence; but, giving her father a look which made him almost tremble for the consequences, Lady Helena said to the butler, as he was leaving the room, "I will trouble you to bring me some Madeira and water."

The poor man, with a look of alarm, bowed, and looked at his no less alarmed mistress.

"There is Madeira in the cellaret," she replied.

"Yes, my lady, but—"

"I know what I say," she angrily answered, and the man disappeared.

"Have you nothing better to give Lady Helena than dry bread," cried Sir George, "to eat with her wine, Lady Villeroy?"

"My dear girl, I hope you will call for what you like, and consider yourself as quite at home."

"Helena has proved that she thinks

herself quite at home by asking for Madeira, Sir George. Had I supposed that so young a lady drank wine in the morning, I would have ordered it, Sir George."

"Well, but neither Lord Erpingham nor I are young ladies, and—"

"You drink Madeira in the morning! Sir George; you know it would kill you."

Here the entrance of the wine interrupted her. Lady Helena poured out half a glass, but, on tasting it, she set it down again coldly, observing, "That she could not drink Cape Madeira," and she saw the butler could scarcely restrain a smile.

Lady Villeroy's countenance now became crimson with rage, while Lord Erpingham looked reproachfully at his daughter.

But Sir George, in a voice tremulous with anger, exclaimed, "What, madam, do you give our noble friends Cape Madeira! let there be a bottle instantly brought of

that which has doubled the Cape, or I will go for it myself."

Lady Villeroy, forcing a smile, with livid lips, replied, "Oh, I did not know that it was part of the education of a modern young lady to be learned in wine." She then hastily left the room, followed by the butler.

Sir George, however, called him back, and desired to know whether there were no sandwiches to be had; the man said he would ask his lady, and hastened after her, while Sir George, muttering an oath, threw himself back in his chair in evident discomposure; and Lady Helena, who enjoyed the storm she had raised, pirouetted about the room; but she now remembered she had a boon to obtain, and, approaching Sir George in her most caressing manner, she begged to speak with him in the next room; then playfully hanging on his arm, as she led him thither, she whispered in his ear her wish to take Julia, her dear Julia, her own dear, blessed, beautiful aunt Julia's child home with them!

"That you shall if you wish it," he replied, brushing a tear from his eye, "though I own I shall miss the poor child very much now; lately I have seen her more than usual, and she has been very useful to me; but she shall go, for I know she will be happier away."

"Now, there is a dear good uncle Villeroy," cried Lady Helena, patting his cheek; "so all is settled."

"No, my dear, no—you must ask Lady Villeroy's consent also."

"Certainly, if you desire it."

"Oh, you have obliged me beyond measure."

"Yes; but if Lady Villeroy cannot spare her."

"Oh, you will find her very willing to spare her, believe me," she replied with a meaning nod of her head; and Lady Helena returned, gambolling before him like a kitten.

Lady Villeroy now re-entered, preceded by the Madeira and a tray of sandwiches, on which Lady Helena seized with

well acted voracity. "Now, I will tell you, Lady Villeroy," said she laughing, "that I would not let papa order any luncheon on the road, though we did not order dinner at Mivart's hotel till seven, because I expected we should get here just at your hot luncheon time."

"Hot luncheon! dear me, we never have such unwholesome things, and we dine at five."

"We did not know that; so, when we came, and instead of being summoned to a hearty meal, I beheld milk chocolate! all my milk of human kindness turned to gall, Lady Villeroy; and I called aloud for Madeira and water, as papa would not,—but then papa is of the old school, I of the new; and when one is where one knows one is welcome, I think it is more polite to give trouble than forbear."

A stiff inclination of her head was all Lady Villeroy's reply to this speech, for her attention was now painfully attracted

to Sir George, who, having tasted the wine to be sure it was right, had filled a bumper and drank it off. Lady Helena, who, in reality, did not want wine, drank a small quantity only, watching Lady Villeroy's countenance all the time, who was observing her father's movements, for he was pouring out a glass which he offered to Miss Brightwen, who accepted it.

"Dear me, Miss Brightwen, what are you about? drink strong wine fasting; for shame!" cried Lady Villeroy.

"I am not fasting, madam: I have eaten a sandwich, and I am ordered to drink a little Madeira every day, and I do drink it."

"Ordered, by whom?"

"By my physician, madam."

"Indeed! an expensive remedy; pray where do you get it, and how can you afford it?"

"I buy it for myself; and I must contrive to afford it as my health requires it, madam."

"Buy it for yourself! in my house, Miss Brightwen," cried Sir George; "Lady Villeroy, why is this?"

"There was no agreement for any wine when Miss Brightwen came hither, Sir George, and no governess can expect Madeira."

"But I expect, in future, Miss Brightwen should have Madeira for her own use, madam."

"Brightwen! Brightwen did you say?" said Lord Erpingham, "the name is familiar to me; I once knew a Mr. Brightwen in Norfolk, is he—"

"He is my father, sir," replied Sophia with great emotion.

"Your father! madam, and yet I see you here."

"Yes, sir, misfortune, and—"

"Forgive me, dear Miss Brightwen; but think of my surprise! when I saw him he lived on his own estate in Norfolk, and I was much indebted to him for his hospitality, and for some days pleasant shooting. Do tell me if—" and he took

her hand, as he spoke, so kindly, and his voice betrayed such interest, that poor Sophia's full heart could not bear it, and, bursting into tears, she rose to leave the room; as she did so, she heard a muttered "what fine feelings!" from Lady Villeroy, but she was made ample amends by Lady Helena's running to open the door for her, and grasping her hand affectionately as she passed her; poor Julia meanwhile sat even more on the edge of her chair than usual, and was unconsciously pulling the oft-mended ends of her gloves to pieces, from violent emotion.

"Julia, my dear," said Sir George, "I feel ashamed to think I know so little of Miss Brightwen's history, you, no doubt, can tell us the whole of it."

"Oh yes, papa; poor Mr. Brightwen was very generous, and so was his first wife, so they lived very hospitably."

"That is, they were extravagant, and made away with their fortune," said Lady Villeroy pettishly.

"Yes, mamma, I fear it was; and then poor Mrs. Brightwen pined and died; and then, and then—" here Julia paused and blushed.

"Well, what then, my dear?" said Sir George.

"Why, then Mr. Brightwen married a rich old woman for money."

"Poor man!" cried Lady Helena.

"Well, but then he became rich again; therefore, why was Miss Brightwen allowed to go out as governess?"

"Oh, because he went into business, and was almost ruined again; his new wife's temper was so bad, and she was so miserly, the children could not live at home, and were forced to go out."

"Poor things! no uncommon case I believe," said Lady Helena.

"I fear not," observed Lord Erpingham, who had been amused, yet pained by Julia's hesitation, and by the similarity of Miss Brightwen's situation to her own — but afraid lest Lady Villeroy should apply to herself his saucy daughter's words and

exclamations, he added, bowing to Lady Villeroy, "all mother's-in-law do not resemble some of my acquaintance."

The lady smiled at this implied compliment, as she considered it, and was about to speak when Julia hurried across the room.

"Whither are you going, child?" said she.

"I wish to go and see how Miss Brightwen is, mamma."

"That is kind, my dear girl," said Sir George. "Do go; Miss Brightwen deserves that attention from you; and here, carry her another glass of Madeira—stay, take the whole bottle, if our visitors drink no more."

"They cannot now, Sir George; they cannot, as Miss Brightwen is to have it."

"They know I could order more for Miss Brightwen, I trust, Lady Villeroy; and I am sure they do me the justice of believing, they are welcome to all the wine in my cellar."

"Certainly we do; but it is not for the

wine in your cellar that we are come," replied Lord Erpingham, eager to change the discourse, " but to rob you of something far more precious;—we come, with Lady Villeroy's permission, to take Miss Villeroy back with us; can we prevail on you madam to part with her?"

A sudden gleam of pleasure was now so visible in Lady Villeroy's face, that Lady Helena saw the point was gained, and bounding towards her with every fine feature full of joyful expression, she exclaimed,

" I thank you—that countenance, kinder than your tongue, to my impatience, tells me you consent!"

If Lady Helena had said, ' your countenance, instead of that,' Lady Villeroy would not have smiled so benignantly as she did, while pronouncing, " Certainly I consent to part with Julia if her father be equally willing;" for that seemed to stand for expressive, fine, speaking, in short, for all the epithets which she had ever heard applied to a countenance, and which Lady Helena's own eyes, beam-

ing with complacency, seemed to see, while she looked impatiently in her face. The only objection, she added, was the state of Julia's wardrobe—and there being no time to replenish it, as her departure was to take place so soon. To this Lady Helena's reply was ready and was satisfactory also; a reply uttered with an arch smile at the corners of her mouth, and a meaning glance at Lord Erpingham, who now began to speak of the necessary arrangements for the morrow, and said that there was room for Miss Villeroy's maid on the barouche seat by Lady Helena's.

"Julia has no maid," replied Lady Villeroy, bluntly; "she has been brought up to wait on herself my lord! whatever assistance she wanted, she has always received from Miss Brightwen."

"Then it will be the more necessary that young lady should accompany her, and I was just going to request the company of Miss Brightwen, to whom I should be most happy to have an opportunity of repaying the attentions I received from her ather."

"Oh, my dear, sweet papa!" exclaimed Lady Helena, how you have delighted me! I was wishing to request this additional favor.

"Aye," cried Sir "George, the poor thing is not well, and change of air may do her good as well as Julia: Pray, Lady Villeroy, spare Miss Brightwen."

The brow of Lady Villeroy now looked dark with storms. This attention shown by Lord Erpingham to a being whom she had always treated with neglect; the admiration which he evidently felt for a woman whom she had considered as incapable of inspiring it, were wormwood to her self-love; besides, she wanted Miss Brightwen's assistance in finishing a carpet, and in mending clothes and other notable jobs; and she uttered a most decided *no*, in no very complacent tone of voice.

Lady Helena was about to argue the point with her, when a look from her father checked her, and at this moment Julia and Miss Brightwen re-entered the room. Lady Helena instantly made known the

permission granted to the surprised and delighted Julia; but when she added that, to the great disappointment of Lord Erpingham and herself, Miss Brightwen could not be permitted to accompany her, Julia's countenance changed, and a tear started to her eye, while she turned round and looked sorrowfully at her gentle and resigned friend; the look was contagious. Miss Brightwen again suddenly quitted the room.

"Sure," cried Lady Villeroy, sarcastically, "that girl's sensibility is quite nauseous!"

"Stay where you are Julia," she added, seeing her hand was on the door, "you seem to forget that our noble guests have the first claims on your notice and attention."

"That I beg leave to deny," cried Lady Helena, "such a friend as Miss Brightwen has the first claim on my cousin Julia's attention, especially when she is sick and sorrowful."

"Cousin Julia!" cried Lady Villeroy

with a sneer, "really, Lady Helena, one would suppose you were a quaker, for quakers always call cousin, even where there is no relationship at all."

"Do they! I am so glad! for they are dear, good people I am told, and Mrs. Fry is a quaker you know."

"Mrs. Fry! that shocking woman who is so fond of bad company and bad people; she goes to Newgate every day and wants to prevent their being hanged! well, I am sure I should be very sorry to be like her in any thing."

"It is not easy to resemble her, Lady Villeroy—but, as you say she is a shocking woman to be so fond of associating with bad people, and merely in order to try to make them good, and then to suppose, poor mistaken woman! that they have souls to be saved like herself, and souls worth saving!"

"Aye, souls worth saving! that is a mistake indeed," said Lady Villeroy, not comprehending the irony, though a little apprehensive that Lady Helena was laugh-

ing at her; but a frown from Lord Erpingham again checked Lady Helena, and the conversation was entirely put an end to by Sir George's pausing in his walk from one drawing-room to the other, and again requesting that Miss Brightwen might accompany Julia. But the *no* was even more violently pronounced than before, and Lady Helena seeing that Julia's heart was full, kindly said, she wished to speak with her, and led her out of the room. They then hastened to Julia's apartment, and while Julia wept on Miss Brightwen's shoulder, Lady Helena indulged herself with many half uttered, half murmured exclamations against cunning, tyrannical, half bred women, and marâtres; which Miss Brightwen was now too sorrowful and dispirited to notice or reprove; still she was glad, very glad that Julia was going to be where she could not fail to be happy; but to have accompanied her, would have made her as happy herself as she now could be; and to see happiness within her reach, yet not be

able to grasp it! but Sophia was soon ashamed of giving way to the weakness of unavailing regret, and her dark expressive eye, freed from its tears, was soon able to reprove the daring sallies of Lady Helena against the sacred majesty of Julia's mother-in-law. To be brief, the noble travellers soon after departed to their hotel, leaving Lady Villeroy delighted to get rid of them, as she feared every moment Sir George's rash and desperate hospitality should urge him to insist on their staying to partake of the fare, which, with no savoury smell, was on the point of being served up. But Sir George felt no sympathy with her delight—with him mortified feelings alone reigned triumphant. He had not been allowed the enjoyment of his noble friend's company at dinner, nor to entertain him in the stile to which he had been accustomed—a stile worthy of Lord Erpingham's rank and his own. Then, his daughter, his heiress was not to have a maid of her own to wait on her, and she was denied the company

and assistance of her dear, kind, young friend and intelligent adviser. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that Sir George scarcely ate at dinner, and that he doubled his quantity of wine after it, now that he exhibited a degree of rebellion to Lady Villeroy's authority, which, till then, she had believed to be impossible, and which alarmed her for the continuance of her conjugal dominion.

No sooner had Julia made her appearance with the dessert, than Sir George desired her to go back for Miss Brightwen; Julia eagerly obeyed the command, but Lady Villeroy, with a faltering voice, begged to know what he wanted with Miss Brightwen.

"I want her, madam," he replied, "to drink a glass of Madeira with me; I bitterly repent I never paid that deserving and unfortunate young lady proper respect before."

"Why, Sir George, you are doting surely—respect to your daughter's governess!"

"And why not?—if I do not pay her respect myself, how can I expect my daughter should respect her? besides, Lady Villeroy, as Lord Erpingham says, she is a very handsome woman, and beauty in distress is a very engaging thing, Lady Villeroy."

"Lord Erpingham is a fool," cried Lady Villeroy, enraged beyond all restraint, "and the proverb says 'one fool makes many,' Sir George."

Miss Brightwen's entrance prevented Sir George's reply, who, in order to make more than sufficient amends for his past neglect, advanced to meet the astonished Sophia, and taking her by the hand, led her to a seat beside him; then asking her what she would eat, put some dried-up raisins and an old sugar-cake on her plate; but on tasting the same himself he muttered a sort of an oath, and hastily ringing the bell, desired the butler to take away the trash he had brought, and get a proper dessert for a gentleman's table at the nearest shop.

The man secretly delighted at what he heard, with an ill-suppressed grin prepared to obey, but Lady Villeroy commanded him to desist, and in a voice choked with passion, desired to know why the dessert was not as good to day as yesterday—and why, what was good enough for her and him was not good enough for Miss Brightwen?

"Because, madam, the dessert has been good enough in your eyes for a succession of yesterdays and to-days—— it is a faded beauty now, Lady Villeroy, and I like something new and pretty, as well as good, like Miss Brightwen herself, so come, you, sir—come you grinning jackanapes!—clear the table, and cover it again as it ought to be covered."

The man obeyed with alacrity, and uninterrupted, for his lady was too full of consternation and of misery, I may say, to make any further resistance; for there cannot be a more agonizing pang in the catalogue of woman's trials, than to see and hear a man, whom she has considered

as wholly devoted to herself, express admiration of youthful beauty; wherefore, she is conscious of the decline of her own charms, and, therefore, seems threatened with the loss of her sovereignty. Even Lady Villeroy's avarice was subdued by this apprehension; and when the butler returned with ices, as well as cakes and fruit, she was not provoked to utter a single angry animadversion, but she sat in silent anxiety, regarding, with a watchful and jealous eye, Sir George's conduct towards Sophia and Julia; the latter he had seated on his lap, and was kindly pressing her to his heart, ever and anon, while he occasionally took Miss Brightwen's hand, and urged her to eat, in a voice which was full of tenderness and kindness. What! two rivals, at once, started up to overset her empire! it was too much, and she began to repent of not having consented to let Miss Brightwen accompany her pupil to Lord Erpingham's.

Sir George meanwhile continued to press his young companions to eat and

drink, and offering an ice to his lady, sarcastically observed, "You had better take it Lady Villeroy, for ice, you know, cannot be served up a second time." Had she been only angry, the chances are that Lady Villeroy would have forcibly resisted accepting the offered favor at the risk of injuring her carpet; but her anger was mixed with so much agony that she only refused what was offered to her with a faintly uttered negative, and continued to beat, what is vulgarly called, the devil's tattoo with her feet.

"My dear Miss Brightwen," said Sir George, "I know not how I shall bear to part with this dear girl, now I have learned to feel her real value," and as he spoke he took Julia on his knee again; "this living image of—" here he paused, as if in strong emotion, and filled another bumper; "but I hope you will be so kind as to look in upon me, now and then, in her absence. I was sorry that you could not be spared, but now, I am selfish enough to rejoice that you remain with us, and

when Lady Villeroy goes out, I trust, you will come and enliven my solitude."

"Certainly, sir, if you wish it."

"Oh, dear, yes!"

"Pray do, Miss Brightwen; and, papa, make her read to you—she reads so beautifully!"

"Indeed! an excellent accomplishment in a woman;—really, Miss Brightwen, I am quite sorry I have hitherto seen so little of you, and paid you so little attention; but in future I will make the most of the domestic comfort, which is, I find, within my reach: my dear girl, here is your father's health—poor man! he is, I think you said, Julia, very much to be pitied. In what way, my dear, is he so afflicted?"

Both Miss Brightwen and Julia were too painfully conscious to be able to answer this question, and their embarrassment was so visible to Lady Villeroy, and the cause so painfully obvious also, that she could not keep her seat, but darting

an angry glance at her, she suddenly left the room, firmly resolving that if Sir George, who was now, she flattered herself, under the influence of wine, should be as fond of Sophia's company the next day as he was then, she should, at all events, be gotten rid of for some time.

Sir George, who from a feeling of vindictive mortification, had struggled with sleep, in order to pique his offending wife, had no longer a sufficient motive to continue his efforts, but gently releasing Julia from his arms, he prepared himself for his usual repose, and Sophia and her pupil returned to their apartment.

"Oh, how kind my dear papa is grown!" cried Julia, as they went along; "I shall now be so sorry to leave him; I do hope you will be very, very kind to him in my absence; but then, I shall be sorry to leave you too. Dear me!—well, to be sure, there is no unmixed good in this world—is there Miss Brightwen?"

"No, Julia, certainly not; if there

were, how few of us would think of another and a better world!"

The rest of the evening was passed by them in praises of Lady Helena and Lord Erpingham, and in preparations for the morrow; by Sir George, in alternate sleep and uncomfortable musings; and by Lady Villeroy, in an indefatigable application to her needle, while her heart was swelling with secret rage, and fears of evil to come, certain, but as yet undefined to her imagination.

CHAP. IV.

THE morning came, and, terrible confirmation of her worst forebodings, Sir George, though no longer under the influence of wine, insisted on the company of Miss Brightwen at the breakfast table. Had Lady Helena been his instigator, in order to gain Miss Brightwen as her guest, he could not have pursued a more certain way of obtaining the end in view. Long before Sophia had eaten the egg, which he forced her to take, Lady Villeroy had said within herself, "she shall accompany Julia!" but she did not make known her determination, as she feared Sir George might now oppose it, from aversion, to part with his new flame, as jealousy styled Sophia. Nor did she mention it till there was only just time for her to get ready against the appointed hour; but scarcely could she do so, for Julia was in such an ecstacy of

delight at the idea of not being separated from her, that she was incapable of rendering her any assistance, till Sophia, in order to soberise her joy, reminded her how much her poor father would miss her society; then the ready tear succeeded the as ready smile, and she was enabled to be useful.

At length the expected barouche was seen driving up to the door, and Julia and Sophia entered the drawing-room equipped for the journey. Julia's dress consisted of a straw bonnet, rather pinched up in front, by the frequent struggle which, during many a winter, it had gone through with the uncourteous wind, and of a dark cloth pelisse, the arms of which were too short for the wearer, while the cuffs were turned up with a skin that once had been covered with hair of some animal, but now only patches remained unimpaired, to shew the enquiring naturalist to what species it belonged.

Sir George's now observant eye instantly discovered the shabbiness of her

appearance, and he turned his blushing daughter round, examining her dress with indignant surprise; as he did so, his eye glanced on Miss Brightwen, and he desired to know whither she was going in her neat and pretty attire; and when he heard she too was going to leave him, he expressed his regret so loudly, that Lady Villeroy was impatient till she was fairly seated in the carriage, and removed from his sight.

To his reproaches concerning the shabbiness of Julia's dress, she had, she thought, a sufficient satisfactory answer: "You know there was not time to get new things ready!"

"But, madam, was such a dress as that ever fit to be worn by my daughter and heiress?"

The word 'heiress,' uttered, for the first time, by the lips of Sir George, had a most overpowering effect on the nerves of his wife, as he had hitherto been as anxious as herself for the birth of a son and heir, and disposed to continue to hope,

though hope were lost. It was with a faltering and subdued voice, therefore, that she answered—

"Your heiress, Sir George? I never till now understood that Miss Villeroy was to be brought up and dressed as your heiress!"

At this moment the servant announced Lord Erpingham and Lady Helena Fortescue; the latter fixed her quick eye on the poor mortified Julia's travelling dress, but delicately withdrew it instantly, and, with an exclamation of joy, desired to know whether Miss Brightwen was so equipped to accompany them. The affirmative, in answer to this question, was received with satisfaction so warmly expressed, that Lady Villeroy's brow grew still darker than before, and her noble guests, therefore, seeing that all was not right, wished to make their visit as short as possible; and Julia having received a cold salute from Lady Villeroy, went with a tearful eye to take leave of her father, who caught her fondly in his arms, and,

in a faltering voice, declared that he did not know when he experienced such pain, as parting with her occasioned him, especially as Miss Brightwen would not stay to console him ; " But listen to me, Lady Helena," said he, " do Julia and me the honor and favor to interest yourself in my dear girl's appearance, and order for her a wardrobe worthy the daughter of—, you understand me."

" I do, and will obey *à la lettre*."

" Thank you, my dear ; then now take this, Julia!" he cried, giving her a bank note to a large amount.

" Oh no, papa, I do not want money, mamma has given me some already."

" Indeed!" he replied, looking pleased, " and, how much ?"

" Two pounds !"

Lady Helena now turned to the window unable to restrain her laughter, at sight of the ludicrous and indignant wonder of Sir George's face, when he heard of this liberal allowance to his heiress for a visit of several weeks; however, he was too well

bred to express his displeasure before company; but, forcing the note into the hands of Julia, he said, "There—there, I hate long partings, especially with those I love, and now, the sooner the pang is over the better." He then wrung his old friend's hand in silence, and, with overflowing eyes, tried to tell him the next time they met, it should, he insisted on it, be for a longer time, and he should not go to an hotel: he then saluted Miss Brightwen, to the great sorrow of Lady Villeroy, and seemed as if he knew not how to relinquish the weeping Julia from his arms; at length they were seated, and the barouche drove off, leaving Sir George to reproach his astonished and indignant wife for her parsimony to his daughter; and her to wish that a severe fit of the gout, by rendering him again dependent on her, might conquer his rebellious spirit, and restore her influence in all its pristine power.

"Stop! stop! whither are you going?" cried Lord Erpingham to the post-boys, "this is not the way home."

" No, they have my orders," cried Lady Helena, bidding the men go on.

" Your orders, indeed! what do you mean ?"

" Oh, you shall soon know, papa," and the carriage stopped in a few minutes at a very fashionable milliner's.

" I will be with you again directly," said Lady Helena, jumping out, but not before she had taken a large handsome shawl from her own shoulders and thrown it over Julia, so as to hide her pelisse entirely.

" What is the girl about now ?" cried Lord Erpingham, smiling complacently, as he saw the joy which lighted up the eyes of Julia while she folded the graceful drapery round her; and Miss Brightwen looked as pleased as her pupil. Lady Helena soon returned with a bonnet of great beauty and elegance, and a shawl for herself like the one which she had thrown over Julia; then telling the young woman, who stood curtsying at the door, that she should hear from her soon; she

untied Julia's old bonnet, tied on the new one in its place, and threw the other with an air of indescribable contempt under the seat, and cried out with an air of authority, "You may drive towards home now. There, papa!" she added, "now I flatter myself, our cousin looks like our cousin; and, oh, when I get her to Laurel Grove, I will make her so smart, you will not know her again, papa!"

"But, my dear, you have not done much as yet—this fine mantle is only an external covering; I thought you would have called Julia out with you, to have her measure taken; is not that the term ladies?"

"What!" exclaimed Lady Helena, "I exhibit my blushing pretty pet in that dress, to the grinning wonder of millinery apprentices; no, indeed! my plans are laid, and I do so enjoy them! but how unnecessary was it for my uncle Villeroy, to desire me to interest myself in the appearance of Julia; never did child long to dress a doll more than I do to dress you!

and that is very generous in me, when I know how much handsomer you will then be than I am." Here Lady Helena's eyes met those of Miss Brightwen: "Papa!" cried she, blushing, "have you ever examined Miss Brightwen's eyes?"

"As much as I dare."

"That's right, papa, be as timid still, for I never was so afraid of an eye in my life, and I shall soon not dare to look at her at all."

"Why so, my dear girl? in me such fear may be prudent."

"Oh, and in me too; for if you had only seen her reproving look at me just now."

"For what, Helena?"

"Oh, she accuses me of affectation and falsehood, that is, her look did—it said you are fibbing, Lady Helena—you think yourself quite as handsome as my pupil."

"Is this true, Miss Brightwen?"

"Yes, my lord, I own it is; but I did not think my looks had been so expressive."

" Now you are affected and false, Miss Brightwen, and I can bear to look at you again; if you did not think your eye powerful, why inflict it on me? that is, why look at me at that moment as you did?"

" I had thought your ladyship superior to the sort of disingenuousness you were practising, and I felt mortified and disappointed."

" There, Helena! a compliment and a lesson at once."

" But, indeed, papa, I value the latter the most, and hope to profit by it."

It was now Miss Brightwen's turn to make disqualifying speeches, and talk of inability, presumption, and so forth; but her good sense, and her integrity forbade it: she felt that Lady Helena had defects, to which a look or word of gentle reproof might occasionally be salutary; and she felt also a high-minded desire to repay her's and her father's kindness to herself, in the only way in her power. Short indeed seemed the drive to Laurel Grove to all the travellers—but more especially

to Sophia, who saw herself suddenly raised to her original consequence after years of contemptuous neglect, and appreciated at her full value by those whose esteem was in reality distinction.

"What a paradise it is!" cried Miss Brightwen, as from the brow of one of the steepest Surrey Hills, the seat of Lord Erpingham, in the valley beneath, burst suddenly on her eyes—eyes accustomed to gaze only on the level plains of Norfolk, while Julia was trying to recollect every scene which she had known in childhood, and making herself believe that all was as it used to be, though she did not think the trees had been so thick and tall.

"If the trees could speak, they would say the same of you Julia—for it is really surprising to think how girls and shrubs too will grow in twelve years."

"True, Lady Helena, it was silly in me to say what I did! well, but I shall not find your mamma grown and altered—my dear, dear aunt."

"Aunt, Julia! welcome sound! what

a convincing proof that we are thirty miles from your mam—— Lady Villeroy."

"Yes, my dear, your aunt is grown fat, but Time, the more he sees of her loves her so well that he cannot bear to hurt her; therefore, she is not grown old, and you know she is past the age for growing tall—but see, there she is at the window."

Julia instantly jumped up, and wholly forgetting her former care to conceal her shabby pelisse in the delight of seeing the well remembered face, kissed both her hands with such vehemance that her mantle fell and disclosed her in all her *mesquinerie* (shabbiness) of appearance.

"There, there, cover up those naked wrists again, pray do," cried Lady Helena, with a look of dismay; "never did daughter of the house of Villeroy wear such a garb as that before, and never shall again if I can help it; but here we are!" Then jumping out, and almost dragging Julia after her, Lady Helena left the Earl to do proper honor to Miss Brightwen, and bounding into the room where the countess and

another lady sat, gave the delighted Julia into her mother's arms. The first look which Lady Erpingham gave, was one of pleasure, for she beheld the beaming countenance and regular features of her regretted mother; but the second was one of pain and mortification, as her person seemed ill-made, and as if inclined to deformity. Lady Helena meanwhile had bounded back again to meet Miss Brightwen, whom in the warm feelings of the moment, she had unceremoniously preceded; but she was too late, the earl was leading her in, and he presented her as Miss Brightwen, a young lady from whose father he had received civilities which he should be happy to return.

"But, mamma, you will never guess who Miss Brightwen is. She is no other than the odious, stupid governess of my dear cousin Julia, whom I was so fond of abusing when unknown, and now she is—" here she paused and passed her arm fondly round the waist of the blushing Sophia.

"What is she, Helena?"

"A dear, sweet creature; only she has formidable eyes, and knows how to use them."

"Helena, you distress Miss Brightwen," cried the countess, regarding her with added courtesy when she heard who she was, and would have entered into conversation with her, but Lady Helena seizing Julia, turned her slowly round and round before her mother and Mrs. Magnal, the lady present.

"Well, what does the girl mean now?" said Lord Erpingham."

"Why this I mean—get Julia by heart, figure, and dress; see what she is now, that you may judge of my powers of metamorphosis, that is all, and I am only imitating the celebrated Mr. Repton, papa, who used, you know, to make an exact resemblance of the place which he was called to improve and adorn, and then give another drawing to shew what it was under his hands. So here you see is Julia Villeroy, a high-shouldered, narrow-

chested, crop-haired, ill-dressed young person."

"Helena! Helena!"

"Nay, indeed, mamma, even your candour can see nothing to admire in this shabby pelisse of which the flames shall consume all the moths have left,—so now, to begin my operations, come away Julia! but I will have all the merit to myself, not even Miss Brightwen shall be present."

"Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest girl, till you applaud the deed! so sit down with mamma, and dear Mrs. Magnal, eat, drink, and be merry, send us up a sandwich, and good bye till we shine upon you in all our glory!"

Julia was as willing to go as Lady Helena, and immediately and gladly followed, or rather preceded her at her bidding—but Lady Erpingham called her daughter back, and in a whisper told her to be careful what she said of Julia's form, as she was very sure the defects were those of nature as well as dress, and not removable.

"We shall see that," she replied, and darted out of the room.

Lady Helena's maid was instantly summoned to a conference; accordingly the wardrobe of her young lady was made to yield up all its stores, as Julia was declared able to wear her dresses, being of the same size with herself, and in a few moments the willing Julia was dispossessed of her disgusting habilaments; but, oh, the genereus joy of Lady Helena, when she found that Julia's form was fine as her face; and it was with great difficulty the poor timid girl, unused to undress before strangers, could prevail on her enthusiastic friend not to summon her mother to the chamber to see how pretty her doll was before it was dressed, and how well jointed.

"Why, my dear creature, how could you ever breathe in these stays of your's?" asked Lady Helena, finding that her own were only just large enough for her.

"I could not always," answered Julia,

with meek simplicity, while Lady Helena stalked about the chamber, with uplifted hand, as if threatening some one, and muttering maratre! odious maratre! at every step, being no longer under the government of Sophia's eye.

At length Lady Helena allowed Julia and herself to rest from their labours awhile, that she might deliberate on the measures necessary to give the last embellishments to her dear, darling doll.

The dress to be worn was soon decided on, much to the horror of the waiting maid, who most pathetically exclaimed—"What, my lady! that new dress from Madam D.'s which you have never worn—the white net over white satin!"

"Dear me," cried Julia, "that's too good for me."

"For shame, Julia—have more self-respect; nothing is too good for the heiress of Sir George and Lady Julia Villeroy—and you, Mrs. Gibbs, do as I bid you, and fetch my present—my first valuable pre-

sent to my dear cousin Julia; you can make me one like it, she shall have the original." I shall not attempt to describe Julia's refusal and exclamations, and, at last, delighted consent, to wear and accept the most beautiful dress she had ever seen, if aunt Erpingham approved; still she was sure she should be happier in a less costly dress, for if she should tear and dirty it—

"But what can we do with this ill-cut crop, Gibbs?"

"My dear girl, what is become of your fine glossy curls?"

"Oh, mam—"

"Julia!" cried Lady Helena, in a threatening tone, "well, then, Lady Villeroy chose they should be cut off."

"Did she!"—a humph—gulping down a hard word; "but your hair is inclined to curl, I think."

"O, yes!"

"Then, Gibbs, soap and water directly?"

In a short time the application was so successful, and the auburn hair of Julia,

curled in glossy beauty over her fine shaped head.

Lady Helena was in raptures; exclaiming, as the work of adorning proceeded, "Oh! poor dear Repton was nothing to me." Nor was Julia, herself, less delighted, as she glanced a timid eye over her dress, while she beheld herself at full length in a glass, and as the consciousness of self-approving beauty stole across her busy thoughts, she wished that the generous unknown, as she called her deliverer, could could see her in that dress.

Miss Brightwen was, at length, permitted to enter, and give her opinion of the metamorphosis, which called a blush of pleasure into her pale cheek—that blush was a triumph to Lady Helena; but Miss Brightwen, herself, as company was expected, and at Lord Erpingham's house she was to appear, and be treated as somebody, was not allowed to escape the improving hand of Lady Helena. Her cap was forbidden to be worn; her fine hair was becomingly dressed, and a lace scarf,

which Lady Helena insisted she should wear, gave a sufficiently dressy appearance to her simple dove-coloured silk gown.

"Now, then," said Lady Helena, "that I have done my duty to my guests, I must do it to myself; come, Gibbs."

"What gown, my lady?—the one your ladyship meant to wear; you know you—"

"What! murmuring again Gibbs! well, as I see you are mortified—"

"Yes, my lady, that gown was so becoming, that—"

"Say no more; to pacify you I will wear the lovely pink gros de Naples, and even as many flowers as you desire; I will be a walking green-house; Persian jessamine shall rise beyond camelia japonicas, and orange flowers beyond geraniums—will that do, Gibbs?"

"No, my lady, I hope I have not such a vulgar taste."

"What! displeased again, really——" Here Lady Helena suddenly paused, for she heard Julia, who had been looking out of

the window into the garden during this dialogue, suddenly exclaim—" Oh, Miss Brightwen!" and leaning her head on Sophia's shoulder.

" What is the matter—are you ill Julia?" cried Lady Helena, running to her.

" Oh, no, nothing, only I saw—"

" What?—a—"

" A gentleman!"

" And what then; is it so alarming a sight as to put you in a flurry?—a perfect gentleman is a rare sight, I own; but, my dear, if one has such an effect, what will two or three have—and I expect as many at dinner to-day, so what will you have to fortify you, camphor, jalap, or sal volatile? How, tears! my poor child! this is really serious; Miss Brightwen, what does this mean?—leave the room for a moment, Gibbs."

But Lady Helena and Sophia both interrogated in vain; Julia only said she was sorry and ashamed of being so foolish, but could not, or would not say more; and again she started on seeing a gentleman

in a dark-blue coat and shining buttons cross the lawn, and left the window in disorder.

"Well, is that the terrible gentleman, Julia? I hope not, if terror betokens love; for that is our head gardener, a great beau, and one of the handsomest young men I ever saw; you can never have seen him before, Julia, I am sure; look again!"

She and Miss Brightwen both looked, and Julia said nothing; but Sophia said, "That is the same gentleman who passed before, and I am almost certain he is quite a stranger to both of us."

Julia was silent, and Lady Helena said, "As this is the case, and you are dumb, Julia, I may as well recal Gibbs."

"I should like to go to my own room," replied Julia; and Miss Brightwen conducted her thither: when there, Julia threw her arms round her governess and exclaimed in great agitation, "Oh, no! no! it was no gardener whom I saw! but the generous unknown who saved my life!"

"You must be mistaken: I looked on the lawn at the same moment you did, and saw no one but the man whom Lady Helena calls the gardener."

Julia said no more, but emotion and expectation soon restored the bloom of which the former had robbed her, and even with greater brilliancy; and when Lady Helena came to conduct her down stairs, she gazed on her with generous exultation; when they reached the drawing-room, Lord Erpingham met the embarrassed Julia at the door, and presented her to the company, while the ever kind Lady Helena gave her arm to Miss Brightwen, in order to mark the respect she felt for her, and courteously introduced her to the circle around.

"There, you see!" said Lady Helena to the Countess and Mrs. Magnal, looking at Julia.

"Well done, Repton," cried Mrs. Magnal, while Lady Erpingham followed Julia with eyes of tender regret, as she recalled her mother to her mind, and lived those

hours over again in fancy, when she and Lady Julia used to enter the room together, as full of unblighted hopes and prospects of future happiness; and how proud she would be of her daughter's appearance; and how happy! as happy as I am when I look at Helena. At this moment Lady Helena's eye met her's, and the tear, hitherto restrained, now fell on her cheek. "Nay, nay," she cried, running to her, and interpreting her look, "not tears for the dead, but smiles for the living, dear mamma; but now, does not my doll look pretty?"

"If she had your carriage, Helena, she would be all her mother!"

"I can't either give her or lend her that, mamma, but she will be able to steal it in time, I trust, having such opportunities given her by you and me."

CHAP. V.

The dinner was now announced, and Lord Erpingham gave his arm to the wife of a peer's son; then pitying Julia's timidity, he offered her the other, and desired her to sit next him on his left hand at the table: she gladly obeyed, not having yet recovered her agitation on entering the room, when, casting a timid look round, she had tried to discover the incognita, but he was certainly not there, and she felt at once mortified and relieved. But she had scarcely begun her dinner when her power of eating was taken away, by the exclamation of—"But where is Marcus? where is my son?" from Lady Erpingham.

"Not ready, his servant says," replied the earl.

Here Sophia looked at Julia, and saw

by her countenance that her hopes and her emotion were again awakened.

"Well," said Lady Helena, "if I had not been ready for dinner, what would Marcus have said?"

"That you were guilty of an impropriety, Helena, and deserved to be scolded."

"Aye, and he would have scolded me too."

"But not unkindly, Helena."

"No, to be sure, mamma, Marcus can do nothing wrong—but even you cannot approve this unusual want of regularity."

"Remember, it is unusual, and therefore excusable."

"May be so; but I am very angry for all that; there was I meditating to present him in my most graceful manner to Miss Villeroy, leading him up to her with—Let me have the honour to present my brother, Captain Fortescue, to his cousin Julia?"

Captain Fortescue! thought Julia; and my deliverer was a naval officer, and a

lord's son! oh, it must be he!" and she could scarcely keep her seat from expectation of his entrance.

"Is that all you meant to say, sweet Helena! I could have done it better myself," cried a singular looking young man, who sat by Helena, dressed in the most studied manner.

"No, it was not all—but now the presentation must take place over a plate of hot soup, and across a plateau, and our grace and dignity will have no opportunity of shewing themselves."

"Well, I suppose Marcus and the second course will come in together."

"This is really abominable, mamma, though it is unusual, especially as Marcus had nothing to do to prevent his making his toilet earlier."

"Take care, my Helena, of Tray," said the young man who spoke before, "or you will repent your severity on poor Marcus."

"Impossible!"

"Yes you will, when you hear what

detained the culprit from his toilet; I know he will be angry with me for telling, but Marcus has been acting his own puppy dog; he has been in the water."

"What do you mean, Mansfeld?"

"Only that he has been saving a child from drowning, and not very far from being drowned himself."

The mother and sister both rose, Julia half rose; but, at a look from Sophia, re-seated herself.

"Mansfeld," said Lady Helena, "this is only one of your bad jokes."

"No, on my honor; ask papa."

"My dear girl, it is all true, but I wished you and Augusta not to know it till you saw Marcus well and safe; he has been in danger, for the river was rapid, deep, and full of weeds."

"Augusta, my love! be composed—he is here!"

Captain Fortescue now entered the room, and his mother and sister ran to him with hearts too full, for aught but the silent welcome of stretched out arms and

tearful eyes; and when he turned his face towards Julia, she recognised in the saviour of the drowning child her own preserver; it was more than romantic seventeen could bear! and Sophia, who also recognised him immediately, and watched her every look, now saw her colour change, and led her out of the room just as the earl exclaimed—

"Miss Villeroy, you are ill; the heat of the room, I fear, oppresses you—Helena, attend to Miss Villeroy."

Lady Helena would have followed her, but Sophia begged she would not, and the former was as yet too much engrossed with her brother to feel interest enough in Julia's indisposition, to be sorry for the prohibition. I shall not enter into any detail of what Miss Brightwen said to her agitated pupil, suffice that she told her Captain Fortescue would despise a weak, love-sick girl, as such ill-restrained emotion would soon discover her to be; and seeing that consideration seemed to have but little effect, she added, that it would be

an ill return for all her years of love to her, if she should now have to blush for her pupil, and have it said of her, that she had so fatally neglected her duty, as not to have taught her even decent self-command.

"That shall never be; you shall never have to blush for me, Miss Brightwen," cried Julia, making a great effort to be calm, and I am ready to accompany you back to the dinner room!"

"When they returned, they found Captain Fortescue made, against his will, the hero of his own tale; but he politely broke off his relation on the entrance of the strangers, to whom Lady Helena presented him immediately, and whom he seemed to look at as if he had never seen them before, which, as Julia afterwards remarked to Miss Brightwen, was very strange: "It was not likely," said she, "that he should know me again in my beautiful dress, but that he should forget you is surprising."

Captain Fortescue's account of his morning's exploit, though told with modesty and simplicity, could not fail to do credit to his humanity, and to deepen the impression which that humanity, when exercised towards herself, had made in the young heart of Julia; but Sophia listened with anxiety to a tale which would not otherwise have interested her, only because she feared for its effect on the peace of her pupil, especially as the reciter was a man in the prime of life, of a noble, prepossessing countenance, and a fine manly figure; not that these requisites were necessary to charm her devoted pupil. The man who had saved her life was the man who had captivated her fancy, and had he been little indebted to nature for the gift of personal beauty, her imagination would have bestowed it on him; nor were Sophia's fears lessened when she saw Julia unconscious that there was any one present beside himself—hanging with fixed attention on every word he uttered, while

he, she also observed, scarcely regarded her in return, or seemed to think that more was required of him towards the new guests than a "will you do me the honor to drink wine with me," addressed to each in her turn; but if her brother was unconscious of the deep interest which Julia not only felt in him, but betrayed, Lady Helena was not so unobservant, and as soon as the ladies retired, she took Sophia and Julia into her own room, and desired to know of the latter whether she was really given to love at first sight, and whether her heroic brother had displaced the handsome gardener in her heart.

"Oh! but—" replied Julia, blushing and stammering to the extremest degree of embarrassment—"oh, but he—he saved my life!"

"Pshaw, pshaw my dear, the boy's life you mean."

"No, no; my life, my own life."

"Who! my brother, Captain Fortescue?"

"Yes, indeed it is very true," said Sophia.

"Oh, you sly ones!" replied the delighted Lady Helena, catching Julia in her arms; "and then, to meet as if you had never met before! And so Julia is a rogue, and Marcus a rogue; and I am so happy!"

"What for?"

"Oh, that is my secret:—but come tell me all about it, for I am dying with curiosity."

Miss Brightwen, then, at Julia's request, related the danger and the escape; the latter of which was wholly owing, she believed, to the generous fearlessness of Captain Fortescue; which generous fearlessness he would have shewn, and exercised, said Lady Helena, to save the life of any one—therefore, ladies, you do not owe him any marvellous obligation, for it is evident he did not know whether you were pretty or not.

"No obligation!" cried Julia, indignantly.

"No marvellous one were my words—but come tell me a little more."

Sophia now informed her of Julia's disregarding her intreaties to ensure her own safety, while her deliverer was in danger: and no sooner did Lady Helena hear this, than she clapped her hands and pirouetted round the room in her usual manner, when she was excessively pleased, and exclaiming, "Well done! my generous, grateful girl; why Julia your are quite as heroic as Marcus in your way, and I promise you he shall know of this."

"Oh, no! do not tell him, pray do not."

"Be quiet, my dear, you are a little fool, and I must insist on being allowed to ask Marcus what I please, and tell him what I please; Marcus, the woman-hater, I call him."

"What!" cried Julia, turning pale: on which Lady Helena gave Julia a full account of her brother's unfortunate and ill-placed attachment.

Marcus Fortescue, when very young, had been thrown in the way of a very handsome and still more seducing woman,

rather older than himself, who had spent her fortune, and whose extravagant propensities made a rich marriage almost indispensible to her:—but the rank of Captain Fortescue had even more attraction for her ambition than wealth had for her necessities; she, therefore, forgot her debts and her embarrassments, when he had drawn from his parents a reluctant consent to the union, and an early day was fixed for its taking place;—but the lover was ordered unexpectedly to join his ship, and the lady, during his absence, was seen and admired by an elderly gentleman of very large fortune. At this moment her creditors, believing her marriage with Mr. Fortescue was at an end, became unexpectedly clamorous; and as her heart was not concerned in her engagements to him, she eagerly caught at the first overture which her new admirer made her, and before her lover returned she was become the bride of Mr. Tyrawley! But so artfully did she word her letter to the half-distracted Marcus; so pathetically did she paint her

agony on finding the extent of her debts—debts, she said, incurred for a brother who had died a beggar, and her consequent resolve, never to burthen him with her embarrassments, a proceeding which love and honor equally forbade That Fortescue was not only her victim but her dupe, and while, as a man of principle and feeling, he resolved never, if possible, to see her again, he fancied her as wretched as himself; and though he condemned the step which she had taken, he was convinced that she was deserving of pity, rather than of censure; still there were moments when he thought that if she had really loved him, she would have gone to prison, rather than have married another man; and, in these periods of misery, he forswore the sex, and appeared as his sister had described him—a woman-hater! but, then, at other times his heart melted into tenderness at the idea of his self-devoted Lucy, and he resolved never to marry, not from hatred of the sex, but from fidelity to her.

Mrs. Tyrawley, meanwhile, was enjoying all the happiness which wealth and luxury could bestow, but all she had of heart was suffering severely—for that all was given to one on whom, in early youth, she had lavished whatever she could command of money, and for whom she had also injured her reputation; one, too, who repaid her often with coldness and neglect, and, who, not unfrequently made her experience the miseries of jealousy. During her engagement to Fortescue, and at the time of her marriage, this man was living abroad with another woman, and vindictive resentment had added weight to the motives which prompted the two marriages. Now he was returned, but not to her, for he pretended to resent her infidelity, though he had publicly avowed his own, and that bosom which abroad was sparkling with diamonds, that made her the envy of her sex, was torn at home with the misery of faithful but unrequited passion; and the injuries of Captain Fortescue were amply revenged.

It was the still remaining influence of this dangerous woman that Lady Helena wished to counteract, by the presence and power of Julia; but it was only too evident that her brother had not only beheld Miss Villeroy without even a consciousness that she was beautiful, and a wish to look again at her, but that, though he had seen her under interesting and remarkable circumstances, she had not made the slightest impression on his memory. But when Lady Helena heard of the moral beauty which Julia had displayed, her hopes revived, for she knew, that though her brother might be blind to charms of person, since the falsehood of his beautiful mistress, he would not be equally insensible to the charms of such a grateful and unconscious self-devotion as Julia had exhibited. "He has evidently forgotten your face, Julia," said she; "but when he hears what I shall tell him, Marcus will not forget your heart; and he has learned to know that a man can depend on a woman's heart with more security than on

her beauty:—so, courage! courage! and if you cannot help liking Marcus, and I fear that you have allowed yourself to think of him too much and too long, I trust that, though as yet you have no cause for hope, you have also none to despair; so look as pretty as you can, and leave the rest to me."

"Oh, dear Lady Helena! how ashamed I am that you should know of my weakness."

"Never mind, if I did not know your malady, child, how could I try to apply a remedy to it?—but let us now return to the drawing-room. It may, however, be as well for you, Julia, to follow Miss Brightwen's excellent rule with you, and never talk on this subject when it can be avoided; I cannot bear to encourage in you an attachment which may be hopeless, even though the object of it be my own dear brother."

"God bless you!" cried Sophia, with great feeling, and pleased at this impulsive tribute.

Lady Helena pressed closely to her side the arm she held, whispering, as they entered the garden, where all the company had assembled, "Now, then, I am sure I have spoken right; is——" Lady Helena was become very anxious to learn her brother's opinion of Julia, and taking his arm she led him aside to ask him if he was not struck with her beauty?

"I have scarcely looked at her," he coldly replied, "but she seems very unformed—no manner."

"She is not mature enough for you, I suppose," returned Lady Helena, rather sarcastically.

"No, she is not," he abruptly answered, and left her as abruptly.

So I have gained nothing by this! thought Lady Helena, regretting that she had wounded her brother's feelings by her evident allusion to Mrs. Tyrawley; but it was not long before she again gained possession of his arm, and led him to a half-circular building, where she had left Julia and Miss Brightwen; but she vainly tried

to force him into conversation with her new friends; his manner was cold, absent, and distant. At length Lady Helena exclaimed—"Marcus, I should like to know how many civic wreaths you have deserved; how many lives do you think you have saved?"

"Only one that I know of."

"Are you sure of that?"

"I think so."

"Did you never save two beautiful damsels from a mad dog, at a considerable risk to yourself?"

"I remember seizing a mad dog by the neck once, just as he was about to spring, as I thought, on a young girl; but she was not beautiful that I know of, but rather dowdy-looking, and the poor thing was so terrified that she lost all presence of mind, and would not follow the example of her companion, and get over the gate, though I could not tell how long I should be able to hold the dog."

"So, then, you imputed her remaining only to terror—did you?"

"To be sure—to what else could I attribute it?"

"Certainly not to its true cause, for that was really so romantically generous and heroic, that I laugh when I think of it."

"Lady Helena!" said Julia, turning now pale, and now red by turns.

"What is all this?" said Captain Fortescue, looking earnestly at the blushing girl, "and how came you acquainted with this adventure? and how does it concern Miss Villeroy? she could not be the dowdy-looking girl whom I saved?"

"But indeed she was."

"Lady Helena, pray, pray do not—"

"Be quiet, I will tell him, and the reason why she would not get over the gate was, that she feared her deliverer was in danger, and she awaited the event in agonizing suspense, regardless of self-preservation."

"Is it possible!" he exclaimed, "looking at Julia with eyes whose expression, had she seen it, would have amply repaid

her for her painful confusion; but poor Julia could see nothing, and, leaning her head on Miss Brightwen's shoulder, she burst into tears. In a moment the tone of Fortescue's feelings towards her was altered. Why did she cry? it was so girlish! such sickening sensibility? and he remembered, also, that she had been forced to leave the room at dinner! yet, to be sure, if it was true, that in consideration of his danger she neglected to provide for her own safety, she was a grateful-hearted being, and he respected her for it;—while these thoughts were passing in his mind, Lady Helena was privately scolding, and Miss Brightwen soothing Julia; the latter then turned to him and said—

"I, as well as my pupil, Captain Fortescue, have always hoped that chance would, one day, enable us to return our gallant deliverer thanks for our preservation; or rather, could enable me to thank him for saving my dear young friend: as you may recollect, that, less disinterested than she was, I took your advice and

climbed over the gate, vainly trying to pull her after me."

"Yes, yes I do remember, and I commended your wisdom; but I think I now see your fair companion as she then stood, her hands clasped, and every feature convulsed with agony!"

As he spoke, he gazed earnestly at the now-recovered Julia, who ventured to raise her eyes to his—eyes which thanked him, and regarded him with grateful emotion in spite of herself.

"Miss Villeroy," said he, taking her hand respectfully, "I little thought what treasures I was preserving, when I involuntarily seized that dangerous animal!—but how could you be so rash as to remain where you did?"

"I could not help it," replied Julia; "I could not move, for the creature struggled so violently, I expected every moment it would bite you."

"And what then, my dear," said Lady Helena, "what would that have signified to you, provided you were unbitten."

"Lady Helena, for shame! how can you talk so unfeelingly; if any harm had happened to my preserver, I am sure I——" Here she turned away to hide the tears that filled her eyes.

"Should never have been happy again, I suppose."

"You see, Marcus, the dowdy-looking girl has a heart."

"Hush, hush Helena! do not repeat such a calumny against the youth and beauty which I now behold; what could ail my eyes when they could see two such objects as those now before me, without committing the image of both of them to memory immediately."

"I will tell you, Marcus, you did not look at Miss Brightwen, and Julia was then a dowdy-looking girl, as you describe her; but thanks to Repton and me—she now is what you see her, and hearts, untouched as yet, may rue the saving of that day. But come, let us in, Julia, the dews are beginning to fall, and from that

danger not even my gallant brother can save you."

Captain Fortescue now offered an arm to each of his new friends; and his sister, during their walk to the house, made numberless bounds, and as many pirouettes.

"But, Julia," cried she, suddenly stopping, "you have not yet expressed your thanks to Marcus."

"She has looked them," he replied, "and that look was all-sufficient; besides, I really feel that I only did what any man would have done on such an occasion."

"Indeed!" observed Miss Brightwen, "you are not just to yourself, for the other men present ran away even faster than I did; Miss Villeroy was the only hero besides yourself."

"Valiant little soul!" cried Lady Helena, patting her on the shoulder.

"Well, well! but I am a sailor, and a man of war you know, and must be brave whether I will or no; and—"

Here a loud shriek from Lady Helena interrupted them, she had nearly trodden

on a frog, and, calling it odious reptile, she shrunk from it with fearful abhorrence.

"Poor thing!" exclaimed Julia, taking it up gently, and laying it into the nearest flower-bed as she spoke, it might be trodden upon if it remained here."

"There Helena! there is a lesson and an example for you," said Captain Fortescue. "Miss Villeroy, most men would have done what you have thanked me for doing, but few women would have had the courage to act as you have done."

"Oh, yes Marcus, yes! any girl that had had the advantage of being Miss Brightwen's pupil—for, see, I am sure by the pride with which she is now looking at Julia, that she taught her to conquer natural antipathies and touch frogs, and be sentimentally anxious to save the lives of the horrid creatures."

"Is it not so, Miss Brightwen, for I remember the time when Julia used to scream even if a fly set up its bristle at her."

" Oh, yes! and I used to run away from a harmless beetle as if it had been a lion—but Miss Brightwen convinced me of my folly."

" Folly! thank you my dear for that back-handed blow."

" Dear me, Lady Helena, I am sure I did not mean—"

" No matter what you meant; you, by implication, said I was a fool—but I forgive you, because I am generous enough to like to see you shine at my expense, and I own you have done so, and that I am a fool to scream at sight of a frog."

" Well, Helena, and what is the next step after seeing one's folly."

" To amend it, brother; and if you will solemnly promise to follow my example, and give up all your follies, I will begin the work of reformation directly,—but, dear Miss Brightwen, I am a spoiled child; my grandmother loved me too well, and therefore never taught me to subdue my own will; she meant well, and I loved her very, very dearly."

"Then prove your affection by not blaming the unintended result of her's, Helena," replied her brother, while Julia exclaimed—

"Oh, dear! it is so very sweet to be loved by a parent, that I wonder—do not you Miss Brightwen—that any one can think their parents can love them too well?" As she spoke her voice became tremulous, and Fortescue again looked kindly on her.

"I really believe, thought he, *that* little girl has a heart, and that she does not say and do prepossessing things from artifice, and the wish to please."

Lady Helena meanwhile, though a little hurt at her brother's reproof, and the tone in which he had uttered it, was comforted by the look he gave her artless friend, and observed, with a smile, "that she wished her heart were as loving and grateful as Julia's."

The greater part of that evening was passed in a manner only too gratifying to the feelings of Julia—for its chief amuse-

ment was looking over the drawings of Captain Fortescue, and hearing him sing duets, or glees, with some amateur performers who had joined the party; but it was with a beating heart, and glowing cheek, that she over-heard Lady Helena tell her brother that Miss Villeroy had a fine voice, as she had been told, and an excellent ear;—also, an admirable eye for drawing, and that she hoped, under his tuition, she would learn both to draw and to sing tolerably, till she was allowed proper instruction. Impossible! I can never sing before him! never shew him my drawings! was the immediate conviction of her mind—yet she was not sorry to hear such praises of her powers, though she was sure Captain Fortescue would be terribly disappointed were she ever to exhibit before him. Still, how she envied the young lady who was so happy as to sing duets with him, was it possible that such happiness could ever be her's! never, never!

The next morning saw Julia risen

almost with the lark to try and copy a drawing of Captain Fortescue's, which Lady Helena had lent her unknown to her brother; and Miss Brightwen was astonished to see how well she succeeded in her task. "And this talent has been suffered to remain uncultivated!" said Sophia to herself;—"but will not Julia lose in peace of mind what she may gain in accomplishments, if she became the pupil of the man she already likes too well!" Yet how could she help it? impossible, without betraying the secret of her pupil, for she saw that Lady Helena meant that her brother should undertake to impart some of his own accomplishments to Julia, and she knew that Lady Helena was too much used to have her own wishes fulfilled, to submit to her representation, and be governed by her opinion. She could not, however, be easy without making known her fears to Lady Helena on the subject;—but that sanguine being declared that there was room only for the hope, as men were all fond of teaching—teaching being a

mark of superiority—and that a dull eye would have more chance of charming a man's heart, when looking up imploringly in his, full of conscious dependence, than the brightest of eyes beaming with independence and power.

"This is system, dear Lady Helena," replied Sophia.

"It is truth also, dear Miss Brightwen, and you must not forbid the poor Julia from trying her only chance to get a heart back, in dear exchange for her own:—for her own is, I see, gone beyond reach."

"Do not say so! I cannot bear to think that the feelings of my pupil are under such bad regulation:—no, I still flatter myself that they can be made obedient to her reason and her delicacy."

"Well, well! perhaps so,—but if Marcus can be brought to love her in return, reason and delicacy may be at the wedding, and give the bride joy with safe consciences, you know."

"True; if—" but opposition was vain. The copy was seized by the scheming

and delighted sister, and carried in triumph to her brother, who owned Julia deserved a master, and agreed to teach her some of the rudiments of drawing;—but Julia made little progress when he was with her. Whether she copied what he drew, or tried, under his tuition, to draw from nature, for her lines were unassured, and her touch faint; but when alone her progress was surprizing; her best effort was, however, seen only by herself—namely, a pencil sketch of her teacher's profile, which might have satisfied the most accurate eye, and was only too valuable to one of the most affectionate of hearts. When Lady Helena, after much solicitation, prevailed on Julia to sing to her brother, Captain Fortescue gave no encouragement to her to proceed, as she really seemed to have neither voice nor ear; and Lady Helena herself believed that Sophia had over-rated her pupil's musical powers from ignorance and partiality: —but, one morning that Julia having seen the brother and sister set off on a long walk, repaired pri-

vately to the music room, to turn over the songs and glees which she had heard Captain Fortescue sing, and was, from ear, singing over all the words which accorded best with her feelings. Lady Helena and her brother returned unexpectedly, and as they drew near, they heard, with surprize and delight, an unknown but sweet and powerful voice breathing forth, amongst other things, the plaintive melody of that old glee—

Since first I saw thy face, I resolved
To honor and renown thee!
If now I be disdained, I wish
My heart had never known thee!

They stopped to listen—the singer repeated the strain again and again, as if feeling lingered over the sound as well as taste; while Lady Helena, with sparkling eyes, whispered Marcus, "It must be Julia! it can be no one else!"

"Nonsense, Helena, no fear could have obscured entirely such a voice and power as that."

Not fear alone, thought she, but timid love might.

"Well, well! listen still," she replied, and Julia sung the song, which in *their* presence she had vainly attempted. Lady Helena triumphed! it was a song which she had never heard or seen till Julia tried to sing it, and now even her brother believed that she was the invisible musician—but invisible she was not long allowed to remain; for, as soon as she had ended her song, Lady Helena threw open the door, and the note which Julia was just going to sound, died away on her lips.

"So, you sly thing, you can sing I find!" cried she, clasping Julia in her arms.

"Yes; there is no want of voice and ear now," said Captain Fortescue, while Julia exhibited such signs of confusion, and such trembling emotion—emotion so far beyond the apparent cause—that the pleasure this discovery of her talent gave him, was quite lost in aversion to what he thought her weak sensibility. Affected

emotion, indeed, he thought it, and he could only bring himself to join coldly in Lady Helena's extravagant encomiums; however he did praise her, and poor Julia did not feel the coldness of his manner, but told Sophia when alone with her, how good and condescending Captain Fortescue was to give her such warm encouragement, and say she had a fine voice. It was, however, some time before she could put forth all the powers of her voice in his presence, but as soon as he was out of the room he often heard her rich and powerful tones following him as he went, and floating on the air as he walked under the window.

This is very strange, thought he at length—I never saw such timidity as this before! The love of admiration, the desire to please have usually given full possession of their powers to all the women with whom I have hitherto associated, but this beautiful girl seems to be a stranger to the common excitements of her sex. It is very strange, but may not eager desire to please sometimes take away the

power, and may not a conscious feeling of--of—— Here Captain Fortescue suddenly paused in his meditation, for he was really no coxcomb, and he found he was on the very point of becoming so;—he certainly observed Julia with more attention from that moment, than he had ever done before, and saw that, though her eye never by any chance met his with a steady gaze, it was fixed on him whenever he seemed engaged in looking at any one else."

"What can this mean," said he to himself, "I am afraid—Pshaw!—yet, I may as well not go on to sing with her so much. The master we have procured for her does very well. I shall not take the pains I have done with her: but whether from curiosity, or pity, or generosity, Captain Fortescue continued his lessons, and Julia was at length able to enjoy that envied pleasure of which she had once despaired—that of singing duets with him! the present moment, however, still bounded the thoughts and wishes of the artless

girl. To be with her kind preserver, as she liked to call him—to receive his instructions in singing and drawing, with fixed attention—to beguile the time of his absence by practising according to those instructions, and looking forward with eager expectation to the hour of re-union with him, now formed the business and the happiness of her life, and as she experienced no jealous fear, because Captain Fortescue payed more attention to her than he did to any other woman, Julia was completely contented with her situation, and all she dreaded was change of any kind.

Lady Helena, meanwhile, was sanguine in her hope that her brother was every day becoming more and more entangled, though unconsciously so, in the light charms of Julia; and Miss Brightwen was inclined to think so too: both these interested observers were the more convinced that Julia was becoming every day more and more an object of interest to Captain Fortescue, from the anxiety with which he ften laboured to impress his sister, tha

he never, never could love again; and that all he could now feel, even for the finest and most accomplished woman in the world, was admiration and brotherly affection. On these occasions his sister was too wise to contradict him, though she was forced to turn away from him, to hide the arch smile which forced itself on her lip, when she saw her brother's eyes, while his lips uttered these assurances, involuntarily watching the door for the expected entrance of Julia.

Nor were Lord and Lady Erpingham uninterested spectators of what was passing; it was one of the first wishes of their hearts to see Captain Fortescue, whose fortune was large, united to Julia; and as the earl had imparted to Sir George his secret wishes on the subject, and had received his assurances of a glad consent to the union, they felt themselves at liberty to do all in their power to assist the progress of the attachment; and, in order to make their son still more dependent for amusement on Julia and the family circle, they

resolved to pass a few weeks at a retired and beautiful cottage which the earl had on the sea-shore, in the county of Sussex.

Julia had never seen the sea, and Captain Fortescue derived a new and unexpected pleasure from watching her expressive countenance, as the sound and the sight of its ever rolling waters first presented themselves to her wondering eye and ear. But not even nature, in this her perilous magnificence, could long abstract the attention of Julia from him who sat beside her; while she gazed, and turning on him a look of apprehensive affection, she involuntarily exclaimed—"And is this what you call your home, Captain Fortescue?—Oh, dear, I almost wish I had not seen it."

"Why so, Miss Villeroy?" replied Marcus, blushing, but gazing on her with more than usual animation and pleasure.

"Aye; why so Julia?" said Lady Helena, with one of her arch looks.

The poor girl now felt that she had said too much, and with excessive embar-

rassment, she replied, "Oh, because—because it is such an unsafe and such a restless home."

"It the better suits a restless heart," returned he, assuming his gravest and coldest manner; for there was an expression of triumph in the face of his sister, who had, he saw, observed his countenance while he looked at Julia; and he leaned over the side of the barouche, with so dejected an air that Julia uttered a deep and involuntary sigh.

"Look, Julia, there is a ship in full sail!" cried Lady Helena, wishing to draw Julia's tell-tale attention from her brother; "there, that is just such a house as Marcus lives in."

"Indeed!" she faintly replied, "and can he sleep in such a dwelling, and on such a restless place?"

"Oh, the more restless the better, as you heard him say just now; but here we are, Marcus, if you are not asleep, perhaps you will condescend to hand us out."

The pavilion, as it was called, was well deserving of the rapturous praises whi

burst from the lips of Miss Brightwen and Julia on entering it. The drawing-room terminated in a large bay-window, which commanded a fine view of the sea, and seemed to project immediately over it, so that, while that mass of waters rolled bluely round on every side, it required no great sketch of fancy for the residents in it to imagine that they were in the cabin of an East Indiaman, and on their voyage to India. Even Lady Helena, used as she was to the view, gazed on it with as much delight as Miss Brightwen and Julia; but they soon missed the latter from their side, for she had found dearer objects of contemplation—some sea-views, with M. Fortescue del. upon them.

"Really, Julia," cried Lady Helena, "I have no patience with your want of taste; to be looking at those paltry works of the creature, when the most stupendous work of the Creator is in all its magnificence before you."

"Oh, but they are your—your brother's drawings."

"I know that, and—" here Captain Fortescue's voice was heard at the door, and Julia's intuitive delicacy led her instantly from the drawings to the window.

"Is not this a delightful view, ladies?" cried Marcus, as he entered.

"O, yes!" said Julia.

"My brother said view, not views, Julia," said Lady Helena, smiling maliciously as she whispered her remark: "I think you are more qualified to give an opinion of the latter than of the former."

"What is that?" enquired Captain Fortescue.

"Nothing, sir," replied Miss Brightwen, alarmed for her pupil, and hastening to her rescue."

"Nothing, but that Lady Helena, who is, you know, rather tyrannical, insists on every one's being as enthusiastic as herself on every occasion; and she is reproaching Miss Villeroy, because she does not feel as rapturously as herself on the sight of the ocean."

"Wretched calumniator! treacherous

misrepresenter!" cried Lady Helena: "I tyrannical!—am I tyrannical, Marcus?"

Sophia was satisfied; she had taken Lady Helena off Julia, and as that was all she wanted, she cared not for her attacks on herself; but the arrival and entrance of Lord and Lady Erpingham suspended the conversation, and Lady Helena forgot to renew it.

The next day it was proposed that they should all go on the sea in a boat which was kept for such excursions; and the proposal was received with pleasure by every one but Lady Helena, who, beckoning Miss Brightwen into the garden, exclaimed, with a look of alarm, "Oh, that we had never come hither!"

"Why so?"

"Because, suppose Julia should be ill at sea?"

"What then, Lady Helena, she will get well again, like other people."

"Yes! but to be seen by my brother in such a situation; to run the risk of disgusting him before she has made sure of

charming him. Ah, you may laugh, Miss Brightwen, but I am a very bad sailor myself, and no power on earth shall ever tempt me to go in the same boat with—I know who!"

"Indeed!" cried Sophia, ceasing to laugh at Lady Helena's ludicrous distress, at the impulse of curiosity; "so there is an—I know who—I am so glad to hear it; who is this feared and favoured person?"

"You will laugh still more if I tell you; it is somebody whom I never saw."

"Amazing!"

"It is the dearest friend of Marcus, and a perfect paragon; now, though I hate paragons, and always fancy them fat, unmeaning-looking beings, with cherub faces, and wings behind their ears, I have an idea that I should admire this Lord Restormel. But then, even such as you see me, Marcus tells me that his friend is not at all likely to admire me, because—Oh, sweet Miss Brightwen, how I do love you for that flattering look of incredulity! but, indeed, Marcus means what he says;

Lord Restormel is very particular in his ideas respecting women, and I am too eccentric, too independent, too daring to please him."

"Then," replied Sophia, laughing, "I should think that your best chance of charming him would be in a boat; for what can make you appear more dependent than sea-sickness, more timid-looking, and more like other people."

"Disgusting dependence! terrible timidity! contemptible common-place!—No, no, when we do meet, I will have all my powers of resistance about me; but, in the meanwhile, do consider the interests of this dear Julia. She must take her chance—she must bear, if needs be, the common lot; and, see, there she is leaning on your brother's arm, and looking so delighted at the boat that is to carry Julia and her fortunes, that I hope the elevation of her feelings will elevate her beyond the reach of physical sufferings."

"But if she should sympathise with me?"

"Is that likely, when her sympathy with your brother must be so much stronger?—we shall see, but never, never shall any man I love, and whom I wish to love me, see me any where but on terra firma."

The boat now waited for Lady Helena and Sophia, the former of whom nearly lost her footing as she entered, it by having her whole attention fixed on Julia, in order to observe how she bore the sea-saw motion which the roughness of the waves had already occasioned; but Julia was all smiles and blushes of delight. The sea was Captain Fortescue's home, and she was there with him, the situation drew her nearer to him, she thought; and never, never had she felt so happy; certainly, she had never looked so beautiful: and while Lady Helena was pale and silent, from apprehension rather than from indisposition, Julia's countenance beamed with a sort of triumphant satisfaction; Captain Fortescue declared she was so good a sailor,

she should go with him on his next cruize if she would honor him so far.

Here Sophia gave Lady Helena a look, which said, see how unnecessary your fears were, and unnecessary they continued to be, for even Lady Helena herself returned to shore, without having experienced any sensation but that of pleasure; and Julia declared that she should like to live on the sea as well as on land.

"Indeed!" said Lord Erpingham, smiling, "then you were certainly made for a sailor's wife, Miss Villeroy."

At these words his son, ever suspicious of artifice in women, darted an enquiring look at Julia, expecting to read in her face that her admiration of the sea was a lure thrown out to entangle him; but Julia's hopes had never yet gone such lengths, and, with the utmost simplicity and unconcern, she replied—"If I had been a man, my lord, I should certainly have been a sailor, I believe; I hope we shall take another sail to-morrow!" Marcus was satisfied she was not laying a snare for him; nay,

he began to think her heart was not so much his as he had fancied it to be, and he felt mortified; for neither man nor woman likes to give up the belief that they possess the power which they had appropriated to themselves, even when that power was not dear to the heart, and was only gratifying to the vanity. This apprehension led Captain Fortescue involuntarily to watch Julia's looks and manners, with more interested observation than they had ever before excited in him, but the result was unfavourable to Julia's interest; the conscious conviction which his earnest gaze and fixed attention occasioned, her downcast eye, her embarrassed manner, and her blushing cheek, set the alarms of his vanity at rest; he ceased to be anxious concerning the prize which his conscience told him he had never sought to win, and for which, as he was sure of it unsought, he, in a measure, felt comparatively little value; still there was such evident purity, such ingenuousness, and such an absence of all artifice, in whatever

Julia said, looked, or did, that, but for the evident wishes of his family, which were too openly manifested, Captain Fortescue's moral taste would have led him to linger affectionately by the side of Julia, and feel no dearer pleasure than in assisting her to draw, and in joining his voice to her in the duets which he had taught her; but fear for her, and his conviction that he could never love again, held him at a distance from her, and even Lady Helena, as well as Julia, was too great a novice in love, to know that a woman has begun to influence a man's heart in a very sure and undoubted manner, when he feels himself obliged to act counter to his inclination, and wean himself at all from her society. Julia, therefore, wept on the shoulder of Sophia, because Captain Fortescue was not within as much as usual; and Lady Helena was quite in despair at finding that Marcus was oftener in his boat than at the piano-forte with Julia; but, Sophia, more skilled in developing the progress of the affections, saw cause for hope where the

others read only despair; this conviction, however, she thought it best to conceal in her own bosom, as Julia's love wanted not the fuel of hope to make it burn only too brightly, and Lady Helena might, she thought, in an unguarded moment, unveil her brother's heart to himself too soon, when convinced that aught was hidden there.

CHAP. VI.

Captain Fortescue's own ship, the Valiant, now came round to that station, and Julia's heart beat with joyful expectation when he declared his intention of giving a dance on board of it, if his sister would provide the necessary number of ladies. Never was desire obeyed with greater alacrity—though Lady Erpingham, on the plea of ill health, had declined visiting in the neighbourhood, Lady Helena had returned all the calls which had been made, and her invitations to the ball were thankfully accepted. On the appointed day, the cabin and deck of the Valiant were thronged with beauty and fashion; and Julia, who had been much improved in dancing quadrilles, by the brother and sister, looked forward to the dance with unmixed satisfaction.

Captain Fortescue began the ball with

Miss Villeroy as his mother's guest; but he was careful not to engage her again, lest the report that he was her lover should be confirmed by his doing so; but he almost repented of his caution, when he saw how closely the heart of Julia was besieged by his second lieutenant, Lord Clanross, who was in the prime of youth, and so excessively handsome, both in face and person, that while he sat beside Julia on the deck, as the sea breeze sported in their glossy curls, and deepened the colour in their cheeks, Raphael might have drawn them as Cupid by the side of Psyche: while Julia's eye was downcast, her cheek flushed, and her smile evidently that of pleasure, as Captain Fortescue, with no pleasing consciousness observed. "And was he then deceived? was Julia coquettish like the rest of her sex; and could this beautiful, noble boy, in one hour annihilate all his claims on her preference, and by administering incense to her vanity and her ambition, banish his image from her heart? could it be? no—he would inter-

rupt their long conversation, held too, as it seemed to him, at an indecorous distance from the rest of the company :" and he was going towards them in order to ascertain what effect his sudden appearance would have on Julia, when Lady Helena, who, with Miss Brightwen was watching with evident pleasure the uneasy countenance of her brother, as he beheld the happy pair, now intercepted him on his way, and seizing one of his arms, while she desired Miss Brightwen to take the other —" Whither were you going, Marcus ?" cried she.

" Going ! I—what does it signify whither I was going, as you have arrested my steps."

" Oh, yes, I want you to answer questions ; Miss Brightwen is rather uneasy at Lord Clanross's attentions to her pupil, and especially as she seems to receive them with so much complacency ; tell us what the beautiful boy's pretensions are ? would it do do you think ? "

"Do! really I—I never thought about it."

"That's a fib, Marcus; for I thought you looked at them as anxiously as Miss Brightwen did, and I feared—"

"Feared what, Helena?"

"That you knew something against the young peer, and were wishing to interrupt so dangerous an intercourse."

"Not dangerous, but a little too marked for a first interview—do not you think so."

"I do, sir," said Miss Brightwen, "and as you are of the same opinion, I shall go and interrupt it."

"No, no; pray do not interrupt so much evident happiness, but give the noble lover a fair chance."

"Lover, Helena! and a fair chance! why, I thought—"

"Yes; I know you think, but you may be mistaken, and if Lord Clanross is an amiable youth, and, as he is a real lord, though, perhaps, a poor one, I see no reason why—"

"Miss Brightwen! dear me! how can you be so officious? see, Marcus, she is leading Julia away; but, oh, how bright our little cousin's eyes look! and how high her colour is; whatever that Adonis said, it was no doubt very delightful!"

As Julia turned from Lord Clanross, the thin scarf which she wore was blown by the breeze against his mouth, and he held it there, imprinting on it so fervent a kiss; and as he did so, Captain Fortescue, as if thinking he presumed too much, rather pettishly snatched it from him, and gave the end to Julia, who blushed still more at the second than the first action, for she feared that Marcus thought she had encouraged the young peer to be so familiar, and that she ought to have done what he did, and looked as indignant; but Miss Brightwen did not look reprovingly; Lady Helena looked nothing but delight, she would therefore have been cheered again, had not Captain Fortescue looked so grave, and, as she feared, so stern.

"What is all this, Marcus?" said Lady Helena, taking him on one side; "why do you so evidently disapprove the young peer's gallantry to Miss Villeroy?"

"I disapprove! indeed you wrong me; but, surely, it was not quite decorous to kiss her scarf?"

"I see no harm in it, if he be a youth of good character, and would make Julia happy; really, Marcus, you seem so very slow in replying to what I say, that, I fear, Lord Clanross is not what he ought to be."

Captain Fortescue was, indeed, surprised at his own unwillingness to reply, as on all other occasions praises of the noble boy were common and dear to his lips, but no ungenerous feeling, however powerful, could long hold dominion over him, and he, at length, gravely replied, "Were Clanross a few years older, Helena, he is all I could desire for the husband of my sister; I leave you to judge, therefore, if I can disapprove of him as the lover of Miss Villeroy?"

"Then why did you look so sternly and oddly just now?"

"Because—because I was rather hurt to see how like Julia is to the rest of her sex—how easily caught by every new flatterer."

"But who ever flattered the poor child before? not you, Marcus, I am sure; at least I never heard you."

"Why no—I never absolutely flattered her, but—"

"Take care, Marcus, or I shall suspect you are jealous."

"Jealous! *I* jealous, Helena! absurd."

Here he suddenly shook off her arm and joined Mr. Mansfeld, who was sporting his airs and graces in the midst of a laughing group on the deck. Lady Helena immediately took the arm of Julia, and looking archly in her face, hoped she was satisfied with her last partner.

"Oh, quite delighted! he is so sensible and agreeable!"

"And so handsome too!"

" Is he ? "

" Hypocrite ! do you not know that he is."

" No, indeed ; I only know that he adores your brother."

" So so—all is explained, to my satisfaction at least," said Lady Helena, smiling at Miss Brightwen, " and so Lord Clanross entertained you, not with your own praises, but those of Marcus."

" To be sure, or he would not have entertained me at all."

" Well ; and are you going to dance with him again ? "

" Oh yes—the two next dances."

" No, no ; that would be too particular ! Marcus would not approve that, nor my mother neither ; you must dance two dances with some one else, before he takes you out again."

" Indeed ! then I would not dance with him on any account ; but why should Captain Fortescue disapprove ? is it very improper ?"

" Why not, very—but I think you

had better dance the two next with Marcus."

"Oh, certainly, if he likes it!"

"I will ask him."

But though Captain Fortescue thought Julia ought not to dance four dances together with any man, except he were an accepted lover, he would not dance with her himself, but preferred introducing Mansfeldt to her, having undertaken to settle the point with Lord Clanross.

Poor Julia was excessively mortified to find that she must give up Lord Clanross for Mansfeldt, and not for Captain Fortescue, especially as she was too unsophisticated, and too unversed in the obliquities and caprices of fashion to relish the eccentricities, or as she denominated it, the assurance and vulgar familiarity of Mr. Mansfeldt; but he was judged a proper person to dance with her, by the man whose will was her law, and she submitted to her fate with as much cheerfulness as she could assume; she could not, however, help assuring Lord Clanross of her inten-

tion to dance the two next dances with him, with a degree of eager pleasure and interest, that deepened the gloom now gathering on the brow of Captain Fortescue, and he turned away, saying to himself, yes, all women are alike; there is no steadiness of attachment in them! how deceived I have been in this girl!—she seemed to have a heart. Julia's eyes, meanwhile, followed him with anxious concern, for his manner towards her was cold, and though she knew he was not otherwise engaged, he had not thought fit to dance with her; but she was soon rouzed from her melancholy reverie by the voice of her partner—"Shall I call Fortescue back Julia?" said he.

"Did you speak to me, sir?" she replied; confused at the question, and half angry at the familiarity.

"Yes, to be sure; is not your name Julia—are not your eyes following Marcus, as if you wished him to return?"

"No, indeed, sir; I did not want him to return, for the dance is going to begin."

" For the dance is going to begin! Oh, then, if it were not going to begin, you would want him, being unable to endure the fatiguing company of Miles Mansfeldt —bad taste that, fair Villeroy! I dare say you neither like deviled biscuit, nor olives."

" I never tasted either, sir."

" No, I dare say not—a plain boiled and roast girl, 'pon honor!—poor thing!—but you will have better taste in time. Now, I dare say, you will prefer that every day John Bull dish, Marcus Fortescue, to me the desired of all men of fashion and taste, to give a relish to their wine, and poignancy to their entertainments."

" Indeed, I do, sir," cried Julia.

" Frank enough, that; but, as I said before, you will know better in time."

" Never, sir—dear me, why does not the dance begin?"

" And, oh, when will it end, say I? Upon my soul, Julia, I only dance with you to please Marcus. As you like plain speaking, you shall have it, my dear. Girls are odious things, like spring chick-

ens—no taste—want green pease and plenty of pepper to get them down at all."

Julia could not help laughing at the queerness and impudence of this speech, nor at the affectation of the manner; on which Mansfeldt conceitedly exclaimed—"There, I knew I should catch you at last, you will admire, me pretty face, beyond any thing in the world in time; and if you behave well, perhaps I may make you the fashion."

Here the quadrille began, and their conversation was, to Julia's relief, suspended, and her attention pleasantly engaged by watching the dancing of her partner, when not dancing herself. It partook of the affected eccentricity of his character, and was sometimes in the first stile of excellence, and then so languid and so lame, that Julia asked him if he was ill; on which mimicking her voice and girlish manner, he replied, "Only got a bone in my leg;" in a way that convulsed all who heard him with laughter.

When the quadrille was ended, Mans-

feldt led Julia to a seat apart, but she preferred, she said, going to Miss Brightwen; consciousness and delicacy, however, withheld her when she saw that Captain Fortescue was sitting by her, and she returned to the seat which Mansfeldt had provided.

"Mutability!—thy name is woman!" cried Mansfeldt, "but I want to talk to that dark-eyed madona myself, so I shall call her to us; what is her name?"

"Brightwen."

"And what else?"

"Sophia."

"Here, Sophia!" cried Mansfeldt, beckoning as he spoke.

She saw the motion, but did not hear the call, and obeyed it; Captain Fortescue conducting her. They found Julia with an agitated manner, and a flushed cheek, and overheard her say with no common indignation, "You are welcome, sir, to call me Julia, though I think it vulgar and too familiar, sir, but I will allow no one to take liberties with Miss Brightwen: I

never presumed to call her Sophia, or Sophy, in my life, and no one shall treat her with disrespect in my presence."

The girl has a heart then, thought Captain Fortescue, looking on Julia with eyes of approving kindness, while Sophia took the seat next her, and asked what was the subject of dispute?

Mansfeldt, meanwhile, was putting his hand, alternately, to either cheek. "She slapped me on both cheeks, 'pon honor!" cried he.

"Slapped you, sir!"

"Metaphorically, I mean, not literally. Fair Amazon!—good bye!—can dance no more with you, bright-eyed Thalestris!"

"Fortescue, I pray tame your young vixens for yourself in future, break in your own fillies!"

"A word with you, Mr. Mansfeldt," replied Captain Fortescue, with a flashing eye, leading him away as he spoke; what he said I know not, but in a short time they returned arm in arm, much to the relief of Miss Brightwen, who, though she

did not impart her fears to Julia, had apprehended an angry conversation between them; and Mansfeldt entreated Julia to forgive all his faults of omission and commission; to excuse language which he meant, he owned, to puzzle, but not offend her, and to allow him to lead her to the dance again. Julia was quite willing to grant every request but the last; to do that she peremptorily refused, though Mansfeldt told her, an overt act of forgiveness was necessary to prove to him that he was forgiven; but she persisted in her refusal, and Miss Brightwen assured him that, as he had informed Miss Villeroy, he danced with her only to please Captain Fortescue, she was unwilling to burthen that gentleman, unnecessarily, with obligations.

From this decision, spoken with a firmness and dignity of manner which awed Mansfeldt in spite of himself, he felt that there was no appeal; and as Fortescue's countenance shewed that he approved what Miss Brightwen said, he

bowed affectedly and retired, but whispered to a gentleman near him, as he passed, and loud enough to be heard, that Sophy, the A B C teacher, was, he saw, disposed to shake her ferule over him, and that he had such a horror of governesses, since he went to his first school, and was forced to sit still, that he always ran away from a pedagogue in petticoats.

"Who can this Mr. Mansfeldt be?" said Sophia to Lady Helena, on the very first opportunity; "and why is a man of such offensive manners tolerated in the circles in which I see him?"

As my reader may wish to ask the same question, I will endeavour to answer it. Miles Mansfeldt was the son of a lucky father, a person who, by assisting to build up the fortune of a man of notoriety in his day, insured his own,—and having an office of trust about the court, was able to give his son a footing in high society, to which neither his birth, nor his real merit entitled him, and which his income on his father's death was not sufficient to enable him to keep.

But Mansfeldt had much shrewdness, some talent, great observation, and a thorough acquaintance with the weakness and the wants of those amongst whom the chances of life had thrown him ;—he knew that, as the worn out, because ever pampered, palate of the epicure requires deviled biscuit and fried bones to provoke it to fresh exertions,—so the worn out sensibilities, and the indolent indifference of idle men of fashion, requires the odd, the uncommon, and the queer, to rouze their torpid faculties into sufficient exertion to enable them to lounge pleasantly through the day, and that the man who can make them laugh at his own expense, or that of other people, is sure of becoming to them a necessary of life, till he is supplanted by something newer, and more cleverly absurd than himself—especially if he can exite wonder in those who have long ceased to wonder at any thing, and who are ready to exclaim, that there is nothing new under the sun ; and that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Mansfieldt

therefore undertook not only to make lords and ladies, and persons of fashion laugh, but wonder also;—wonder at his queer similies, laugh at his ready application of them, and still more at his excessive impudences, and even ill-bred daring;—but as he usually contrived to let an excessive respect for rank peep through the familiarity with which he addressed it, and gave himself the appearance of acting a part, as if he was only making a buffoon of himself to entertain those who were nearly past the power of being entertained, he became at length a privileged person; and as he danced well, dressed well, wrote epigrams, drew caricatures, and sang comic songs, and was an admirable mimic, no party was complete without Miles Mansfieldt, and his sayings were retailed by the great, the beautiful, and even by the intellectual—since what they wanted in wit they made up in oddity. However, at the time of which I am writing, he was degenerating fast into vulgar familiarity, unredeemed by humour,

and many besides Sophia Brightwen and Julia, were beginning to ask, who can this Mr. Mansfeldt be? and why is he here?

Lady Helena could only say that she found Miles Mansfeldt in possession of a certain sort of power, a sort of patent place about fashion's court, which he had, she concluded, purchased in some way or other, with certain perquisites annexed to it, namely, the liberty of dispensing with the common forms of society, and giving, and withholding names and titles as caprice and impudence dictated;—but she supposed his would be like other unnecessary offices, abolished by modern reformers in the state of fashion—and she thought it very evident that he had long ceased to be on the civil list. To which punning truth her auditors readily assented: while Lady Helena was giving this sketch of Mansfeldt, Lord Clanross came to claim the hand of Julia, who yielded it with such pleased alacrity, that Fortescue, who, though at a distance, was

looking at the group with fixed attention, turned half-indignantly away—for though the pride of man as yet forbade him to own it to himself, he had had pleasure in believing the heart of Julia was his, and wounded as his own had been by the falsehood of one woman, there had been something healing and delightful to him in the belief that he was loved with grateful tenderness by another of the sex, and one whose notice and regard would soon, he knew, be eagerly sought for and greedily coveted. That time was come,—Julia was no sooner seen than she was admired and courted, and his fancied hold on her affections seemed to him to have dwindled entirely away.

"There," said he again, turning to look at them in spite of himself.

"How she smiles on him while he speaks to her! and how delighted, how animated she looks! I wonder why Clanross does not look equally happy!" but it was evident that he did not, and when Julia was called away from him by Sophia

to go and speak to Lady Erpingham, Lord Clanross approached him with folded arms, with a countenance expressive of any thing but satisfaction.

"What is the matter, Clanross?" said Captain Fortescue; "has the smile of youth and beauty a saddening, rather than enlivening power?"

"Yes, sir, when that smile is for another, not for me."

"What do you mean?"

"Is it possible, Captain Fortescue, that you do not know? Miss Villeroy smiles on me only, because I talk to her of you, and in your praise; and this very moment, when she left me, she said, 'Well, be sure to recollect some more anecdotes of my preserver, to tell me when I come back to you.'"

Fortescue blushed—uttered a pooh! pooh!—nonsense! it is all gratitude, I assure you: but he was ashamed to feel what a weight was instantly removed from his brow, and with what complacency he looked around him, and especially on Lord

Clanross; on Julia he did not dare to look, lest his countenance should express too strongly the revulsion which had taken place in his feelings; and he was glad to find immediate occupation in obeying the wishes of Lady Erpingham, who thought the elegant cold collation which had been prepared on board ship, had better be eaten on shore, as a wind had sprung up, which was likely to endanger the comfort of many of the guests. Accordingly the boats were gotten ready, the debarkation began, and by the time the whole party was landed at the pavilion, Captain Fortescue was again master of his feelings and his looks; during the rest of the day nothing occurred worthy of particular notice, except that an accident which called forth the fears of Julia for the life of Captain Fortescue, was the means of gratifying the feelings of the latter, and wounding those of her young admirer, Lord Clanross. A rash, unthinking boy took up a gun, which he found lying on a bench in the garden, with which a servant had been

shooting sparrows, and aimed it at Marcus, who was walking with Julia; it went off and the shot hit him in the face. Julia seeing the blood flow, and terrified also at the suddenness of the explosion, rent the air with her cries, and looked at him with such an agonized expression of tenderness, that Miss Brightwen was very glad she was beheld and heard by no other bystander than herself; and Lady Helena was not less delighted to observe that Fortescue assured the almost fainting girl that he was only slightly hurt, in a voice and manner almost as tender as the one to which he replied. And when Lord Clanross hastened to the spot with the rest of the company, to enquire into the result of the accident, he saw enough in Julia's still, unsubdued terror, to overcloud his brow, and destroy his enjoyment for the rest of the evening.

"Poor youth!" said Sophia to Lady Helena, when they retired for the night.

"Nay, nay, be not alarmed for him," replied Lady Helena, "he will take no

harm, I believe; he is young enough and susceptible enough to fall in love with every pretty girl whom he sees, and if she will not have him another may, and the noble Cupid will be happy at last; when he first saw me, he was *perce de mille dards,* but I was in a cold, haughty humour, and my ice smothered his fire instantly; but Julia's deceitful smiles blew it up into a flame; I really pitied him when he found out that to her he shone only with reflected light."

"And, pray Lady Helena," said Sophia, "with what light did that odd-looking young man shine, who engrossed so much of your attention during the day?"

"Odd-looking only!—ugly you mean."

"Why, yes, ugly if you will allow me to say so."

"But he is very agreeable; that is, he answered all my purposes, and gratified all my feelings."

"Indeed! and who is this favoured man?"

"A married man, my dear questioner."

"Surprizing! then he too shines, I

suspect, with that reflected light of which you were talking."

"He does; for he married Lord Restormel's first cousin, and, during the father's life, as it was a marriage against the consent of parents, he and his wife would nearly have starved but for Restormel's generosity, and, in short, it did my heart good to hear such traits of true nobleness of nature, and considerate delicacy, as he told me of my brother's friend."

"And did it do your heart good only, dear Lady Helena?"

"Why, I do not exactly know; for I own that I think too much of this man already, as, should we meet, there is very little chance of his liking me; still, still we do meet, and my fate is determined; I have resolved to discourage all other pretenders, though I am equally determined never to yield long to the miseries of a hopeless passion; for that, I trust, I am too proud, and too strong-minded; and, unlike poor Julia, I shall never pine away the victim of ill-requited tenderness."

"And why do you think that Julia would so yield, and so pine? Is it possible that you do not see in her the most decided candidate for this sort of self-devotion?"

"What could save her if Marcus were to marry another, or prove in any way unworthy of her devoted attachment?"

"Principle—while there is a hope of a return, and there is no crime in loving her preserver, for it was gratitude in her that led to love; she will persevere, and she will suffer, perhaps, from the torments of suspense and anxiety; but, depend on it, that girlish, unresisting as she seems, Julia's piety and sense of right would enable her to bear up against trials which might, perhaps, prove too much for you."

"If so, how wisely must you have formed her heart and mind, and how could you bestow on her this counteracting energy."

"Merely by making her a Christian, a practical Christian, and teaching her the duties of submission to her heavenly

Parent: and the obedience to the will of a nominal earthly one, to which she was obliged, that necessarily submitted will, in little things, has been, believe me, an excellent preparation to submission in great things."

"Alas!" cried Lady Helena, her fine eyes filling with tears, "if this preparation be necessary to enable one to bear the probable trials of life, what will become of me when the hour of trial comes?"

"Only learn, dear young friend, to distrust your own strength, and to cast your own cares on him who is able to carry you through all trial, and you need not fear."

Lady Helena shook her head, as if distrusting, or unable to apply to the remedy, and retired to her chamber. The fortnight that followed was one of great happiness to Julia, and of pleasing expectation to her friends, for Fortescue rarely left the pavilion, and he was now never tired of correcting Julia's drawings, or of teaching her new music; and Lady Helena

remarked in silence, that Marcus now was more eager to teach Julia new duets than new songs; and that Moore's tenderest words lost none of their tenderness when uttered by either party. Lord Clanross, meanwhile, visited daily at the pavilion, and implicitly relying on Marcus's assurances in former days, that he should never marry, he buoyed himself up with the hope, that his devoted attentions, and ardent love would, in time, induce Julia to transfer her affections from one who could not return it, to one on whom it would bestow happiness the most perfect; still there were moments when he believed it impossible for Captain Fortescue to resist the ill-concealed regard of such a fascinating girl; nor could he fail to observe, that however unlike a lover his friend seemed when Julia's attention was wholly devoted to him, his manner assumed all the restless and almost pettish jealousy of one, whenever she seemed engrossed by his conversation, and disposed to smile on his assiduities. If he be jea-

lous of her, he can and does love, thought he; all my hopes are vain; but self-love has its jealousies as well as love, and so like is the false to the true, that it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other. But even at these moments of anxiety, Lord Clanross shewed the truth of Lady Helena's observations on him, for if she smiled on him, and tried to share his attentions with Julia, she could always succeed in her attempt; and he said within himself, had she smiled and talked thus when I first saw her, she would have been the choice of my heart; and Lady Helena, whenever she heard his deep sigh, and saw his jealous glance at Julia and her brother, could scarcely refrain from patting him on the arm, and saying, never mind, you may suffer for awhile, but the pang will soon be over. Lord Clanross, however, no doubt, thought differently; as the lover who believes he can never cease to love, is ceasing to love already; a circumstance now took place which made him resolve to bear his state of suspense no longer, but

avow his passion to the object of it; for, by the death of a distant relation, he became possessed of a considerable fortune, and was able, therefore, to offer such settlement to the heiress, as Sir George Villeroy could not but approve; still, however, he hesitated, because he was afraid of a refusal, and because he fancied that Captain Fortescue wore every day more and more the air of a declared lover; he therefore resolved to write to him, as to write was more easy than to speak on such a subject, and request to know what was his situation, or what were his intentions with regard to Miss Villeroy: he did so, and it was with more emotion than he had imagined possible, that Fortescue received and read this letter, he could easily say what was his situation, but what were his intentions with regard to Julia, it was not so easy for him to declare; however, Lord Clanross did not require an immediate answer, as he was gone to London on law business, and he trusted that before his return he should know his own mind;

but he could not fail to observe what an effect this letter had on his feelings towards Julia; he was now certain that the moment was arrived when his attentions might be proved beyond dispute to have interfered with her forming a proper and desirable marriage, as it was evident that while he remained near her, even though not attentive to her himself, her heart was too much prepossessed in his favour to allow her to make another choice—what was he then in honour and in justice to do? was he to absent himself immediately? or was he to conquer his own heart, and offer himself to her acceptance? But could he do this? was his attachment to another woman sufficiently subdued? While these thoughts were passing in his mind, he could not help regarding Julia with more tenderness than ever, for he was either on the point of making her his own, or of surrendering her to the claims of another; if he did the former, he, spite of himself, dwelt with delightful anticipation on the pleasure of being beloved by so pure and

devoted a heart; and if he did the latter, he shrunk with painful pity from inflicting on her that misery which he had endured himself, for he believed that for some time at least Julia would be unhappy, though, ultimately she might be happy with another man, and rejoice that she had not married the object of her first attachment. But was it possible for him to resolve to afflict so affectionate a heart, even for a short period? Fortescue thought not, as he hung over her while she sung or drew, and saw her modest yet expressive eyes raised to his as if asking for that approbation of her efforts which was the only reward she sought or desired. At these moments there was so much answering love in his voice, look, and manner, that the whole family, and even Miss Brightwen herself, were convinced that in a very short time they should be made happy by seeing Julia the betrothed wife of Marcus; and in spite of her well principled caution, Sophia could not help joining Lady Helena in congratulating Julia on having at length

gained the heart of the man who had long been in possession of hers. Fortescue himself had retired to rest that night, believing that his mind was made up, his fate decided, and his heart satisfied; he, therefore, wrote as follows to Lord Clanross:—

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Ere this letter reaches you, I shall have come forward as a candidate for the love of Miss Villeroy; with what success I cannot presume to anticipate; but in a nature so grateful and so generous as her's, it is very likely that the obligation which she thinks she owes me, will influence her to smile on my suit, in preference to that of a younger and handsomer man. However, you shall know the result of my application as soon as I know it myself. I shall console myself for your disappointment, should it take place, dear Clanross, by the hope that as you have not been much with Miss Villeroy, your attachment cannot be strong enough to cloud over your brilliant prospects for any considerable period. I, on the contrary, have

had so many opportunities of witnessing the excellence of her heart and character, that I soon felt my aversion to marriage insensibly fade away, and my heart re-awaken to feelings, which I thought extinct in it for ever."

Here Fortescue laid down his pen, for the image of his first love came over his mind; but that of Julia Villeroy soon replaced it, and he went to bed decided and happy.

The next morning there was much less conversation at the breakfast-table than had ever been before, but never so much conscious satisfaction. Julia, indeed, was more full of blushes, and her eyes more commonly downcast than ever, especially when Fortescue, with pleased alacrity, busied himself in rendering her those little attentions by which love delights to shew itself, and of which it is so delightful to be the object of one moment; he had to clasp her bracelet round her sleeve; next, to replace the scarf that had deserted her shoulder; now, to pick up her handker-

chief; in short, he had no eyes, no ears, but for her and her wants; and it was evident to the lookers on, that as soon as breakfast was over, he would seek an opportunity to make a declaration of love, and Julia's fate and his own be unequivocally decided.

But who shall dare to calculate with any certainty on the chances of futurity? It is curious to observe how often events, trivial both in reality and in appearance at the time of their occurring, are sometimes most important in their operation on the fate of those concerned in them; and how often the unguarded utterer of a severe and just reproof has had to rue, perhaps, through life, the result of the enmity which that reproof excited.

Julia Villeroy had entirely forgotten that she had inflicted a wound on the self-love of Miles Mansfeldt, and if she thought of him, she did so with indifference, not resentment; but he had not forgotten the wound his self-love had received, and he remembered her with malignity and

vindictiveness; to him, therefore, the prospect of her being doomed to pine in hopeless love for his friend, Captain Fortescue, was replete with mean satisfaction; and when he saw reason to believe that her passion would be returned, he was filled with mortification and inquietude; but the latter feeling had more causes than one. Mansfeldt, in addition to other vices, had the vice of gaming, and the greatest part of his property had long ago been played away; he had, consequently, often been in very distressed circumstances; as though on the whole a lucky gamester, there were times when his luck entirely deserted him.

At these times Captain Fortescue, who gained considerable prize-money during the war, had generously stepped forward to assist a man whose pleasantries had often enabled him to wear away many a miserable hour, and never had Mansfeldt applied to him for relief in vain. But if he married Julia Villeroy, whose unsophisticated taste he knew he was not likely

to please, and whose influence over her husband he believed would be unbounded, he feared that he should no longer be an ever-welcome visitor to Fortescue, and that the hand and the heart once so open to his tale of distress, would be closed against him for ever. It was, therefore, worth his while to try to prevent the marriage, and he laid his plans accordingly.

On their way from the continent, Mrs. Tyrawley and her husband landed at Brighton, and thence proceeded to Bognor, whence Mansfeldt, who was staying there, was in the habit of bringing over parties, either by land or by water, to see the pavilion, usually coming at those hours when he knew the earl and his family were likely to be taking their morning drives or sail; but when Mr. and Mrs. Tyrawley arrived, and the latter expressed a strong desire to see a spot which she had so often heard Captain Fortescue praise, he expressed his readiness to be her escort, but named as the proper time for setting off, an hour, when

Marcus, he knew, would be at home, and could not fail to meet and to behold this destroyer of his peace; nor was the lady at all averse to see Fortescue again; she was desirous of proving whether he had really broken her chain, as she had heard with a contemptible, but very natural jealousy, that her devoted and long faithful admirer was on the point of marrying a young and beautiful heiress, to whom he was said to be most tenderly attached.

"This last part of the story," said the artful Mansfeldt to her, "I totally disbelieve; the man who has ever truly loved you, Lucy, cannot, I am sure, love such an insipid doll as Julia Villeroy; and as I know he will be very wretched if he marries her, I wish you would throw yourself in his way, and should the now-smothered flame burn out afresh, Fortescue will be saved from destruction, and you will have the satisfaction of being his preserver."

"That would be joy to me, indeed, as I fear I used him very ill, poor fellow," was the coquette's apt reply, and she prepared

for the rencontre with the most impatient alacrity.

" See, see Marcus! there is a sailing-boat making for the shore," cried Lady Helena, " and full of ladies and gentlemen too."

" So there is," he replied; " and, if I mistake not, Mansfeldt is on board: whom is he bringing now, I wonder, and at this hour! for the horses are round. It is very inconvenient, I was just going to drive Miss Villeroy out in the pony chaise."

" Well! surely, you need not wait to receive him, or his guests;—away with you."

" Not so, Helena, he sees that I know him, and I would not willingly run the risk of hurting his feelings." The truth was, that Fortescue knew Mansfeldt wanted to borrow money of him, and he feared that he would suppose he wished to avoid him on that account. Accordingly, Fortescue hastened to the shore to assist the party to land, and he observed, with some surprise, the well acted reluctance of Mansfeldt to receive his assistance.

"No, no, Fortescue, do not trouble yourself; I was sure you would be out, making love in the woods with your Phillida, or I would not have come."

"How unfortunate! he added, in a whisper, "but she would come—I could not keep her away."

"She would come!—who would come and what does all this mean?" thought Fortescue.

There was now only one lady to assist from the boat, and she was closely veiled. Mansfeldt pretended to press forward to her assistance, but he took care to make a false step, which, by forcing the boat on one side, seemed to endanger the safety of the lady, who eagerly stretched out her hand to catch hold of Captain Fortescue; he as readily met her grasp, and assisted her to land; but, whether from carelessness, emotion, or design, her foot slipped, and to save herself from falling, she was forced to encircle the neck of her supporter with her arm. At this moment her veil dropped off, and he beheld the woman whom he

had so fatally adored—the woman, whom he had resolved never to behold again; and whose allurements, and whose falsehood he had hoped to forget in the possession of innocence, tenderness, and beauty. But there she stood, with eyes imploring pardon! eyes full of tears, of tenderness, and irresistible power; her fine arm still resting on him as if she was too much agitated to stand without support; and all the witchery of her form and manner, armed in all its dangerous power against his peace, and him.

Fortescue tried to shake off her hold; he tried to avert his eyes from her, but it was impossible. The days of his earliest tenderness—the day of his youthful happiness and fondest hopes stole over his recollection; she looked on him as she had then looked; her hand courted the grasp of his as if it had never, never been given to another; and it was not till he remembered that he held the wife of another man, that he had power to turn away from her with abhorrence, and uttering—cruel,

accursed chance! to rush from her presence, and seizing his servant's horse, to ride far away from her and her destructive fascinations.

CHAP. VII.

THE windows of the breakfast-room overlooked the spot where this scene was passing, and at those windows stood the happy group which Fortescue, impelled by kindness, had left to go and meet Mansfeldt; but no one but Lady Helena knew Mrs. Tyrawly personally, and turning very pale, she clasped her hands together and exclaimed—"'Tis she, 'tis she herself! and Marcus will be again lost! Look, look, there he goes! O, poor, poor Marcus."

"What can you mean?" cried Lord Erpingham, and whom did you see?"

"Who! that woman, Mrs. Tyrawley."

"Impossible!" he returned.

"Who should presume to bring her hither! you must be deceived, Helena," said Lady Erpingham—no one could do so improper a thing."

"Yes, Mansfeldt, for he dares do any thing."

"Nay, nay Helena, you are too severe; and surely the lady herself was incapable of so indelicate a proceeding."

"My dearest mother, do not irritate me by saying any thing palliating of that woman! I tell you I saw her and— but where are Julia and Miss Brightwen?" They had retired to their own apartment unperceived.

Sophia and Julia had both seen the expression of Fortescue's countenance as he turned from the lady, who was leaning on him, and rushed towards his horse; and as soon as she heard the name of Mrs. Tyrawley, Miss Brightwen hurried her almost insensible pupil away,—she felt that the sorrows of ill-requited tenderness were too sacred to be seen by the eyes of any one; and when she reached their apartments she delicately offered to leave the agonized girl alone;—but Julia felt her presence a support, and being well aware of the extent of her calamity, for how could Captain Fortescue marry one woman while his feelings were still so evidently

under the dominion of another, she gave way to an immoderate burst of sorrow, upon the sympathizing and supporting bosom of her friend,—but it was not long before her well-regulated mind was able to listen to the voice of consolation. Sophia offered it thus—" What a mercy it is that this meeting did not take place after you were married, instead of before! What an escape have you not had!"

At first poor Julia was inclined to dispute the truth of the observation, and to believe, that if she had been his wife, her devoted love would have so much won upon his heart, that it would have been proof against the power of this unworthy woman: but Sophia tried to convince her that she thought too highly of the nature of the other sex, in attributing such influence to the tenderness of a virtuous wife, when put in competition with the blandishments of a mistress whom the husband had loved with all the ardour of a first passion—and that Captain Fortescue

having proved his own remaining weakness to himself, could not now, as an honorable man, become the husband of any woman.

Lady Helena, meanwhile, was impelled by affectionate pity, but, withheld by delicacy from seeking the afflicted Julia, especially as she could not give satisfactory answer to the qestions which Julia would naturally put to her, "Whither is your poor brother gone, and when will he come back?" for Captain Fortescue had said to his servant as he mounted his horse, "I shall not be back for some days." Still she could not help going to Julia's apartment, and was on the point of reaching it when the sight of Mansfeldt, nodding and smirking at the hall window, and about to knock at the door, made her hurry back again; and with a countenance of indignant resentment she returned to her mother and the earl.

"There is Mansfeldt at the door," said she, "coming, as I suspect, to triumph in the mischief he has done!"

"Nay, Helena, surely he could not do

the mischief designedly, he is not a fiend."

"My dearest mother, he might think it only a good joke."

"Whatever he thought it, here he shall not come. It was a liberty," cried Lord Erpingham, "in Mansfeldt, or in any man, to bring Mrs. Tyrawley hither, and self-respect obliges me to resent it."

Here the earl entered the hall, followed by Lady Helena, just as Mansfeldt was admitted: spite of his habitual impudence he was awed by the lofty carriage, and cold dignity of the earl, as he shrunk proudly from his offered hand; nor could his malignant, light grey eye, meet with any steadiness the flashing eyes and searching glance of Lady Helena, while a smile of contempt played *cordently* on her beautiful lip.

"My lord, I—I am sorry; hoped to find you all out, or I should not——" was all he could at first say.

Here Lord Erpingham interrupted him with—"But as you find us all at-home, Mr.

Mansfeldt, you and your party had better re-embark with all possible expedition." So saying he turned his back on him.

The countess, fearing her lord had been too severe, now came forward, and said, "Mr. Mansfeldt, my lord and I do not suppose you meant to do harm by coming so accompanied."

"Me, countess! oh, dear no, 'pon my honor, no—and sweet Helena, I—"

"Lady Helena Fortescue is my name, sir," she replied, "and I am Helena to those only whom I respect and esteem."

"In attitudes, I protest," cried Mansfeldt, "but I assert my entire innocence of any design to—"

"Sir," cried Lord Erpingham, "had I believed that you did not so come hither, I would not have condescended to hold with you, even this short colloquy. Good morning. Drummond open the door for Mr. Mansfeldt."

"My lady, the Right Honorable Lady Helena Fortescue, one word with you," said the undaunted Mansfeldt. But

regarding him, with a look of such indignant contempt, that even he was confounded by it, she waved him from her with a haughty and scornful air, and followed her proudly bowing father, and her kindly curtsying mother into the drawing-room. And Mansfeldt was forced to leave the house unheard.

" Helena," said the earl, who began to think his daughter's suspicions of Mansfeldt just—" Helena, I shall give orders that in future I am never at-home to Mr. Mansfeldt."

" Poor man," said Lady Erpingham—" but if he should be innocent of any design!"

" Why even then his want of feeling in intruding himself on us at such a moment, and his impertinence to Helena, ought to be resented, and I wonder that I have even been prevailed upon to bear with him so long."

" Poor man—but as—"

" Lady Erpingham say no more! there

are times and seasons when indulgence degenerates into weakness, and this would be one of them."

The benevolent pleader unable to resist the words of her husband, and the looks of her daughter, obeyed and was silent.

"Now I will go to dear Julia," said Lady Helena.

"Aye, do my dear, and tell her how bitterly we feel our disappointment, and that both your mother and myself long to express to her our regrets, and how tenderly endeared she is to us by this trial inflicted on her."

"Oh, dear! no papa; you had better take no notice to her whatever of what has occurred when you meet. The subject was always too delicate a one to discuss with her, and now it is more sacred still!"

"Well, I believe you are right; yet when I see this beloved girl, I shall scarcely be able to refrain from tears."

"Indeed you must try, mamma; but

I must go, or she will wonder why I stay away, though she may not wish to see me."

Julia was beginning to wonder at not seeing her, when Lady Helena knocked at the door. It was opened by Julia herself, and with a countenance so calm, so resigned, yet, at the same time, so sorrowful, that Lady Helena was even more affected then if she had found her in tears; and her own assumed composure utterly forsook her.

"Oh, my poor infatuated brother!" she exclaimed, throwing herself on Julia's neck! "Miss Brightwen! dear, dear friend, do not, do not hate poor Marcus."

"Hate him," cried Julia, struggling with her tears; "who could ever hate your brother! not Miss Brightwen, I am sure—no, nor any one: what has he done to deserve hatred?—no, no, he deserves pity, but not hate; but where is he?"

As Lady Helena expected, her answer was by no means satisfactory, and fears for Captain Fortescue wrung from poor

Julia expressions of agony, and signs of agitation which her sense of his own disappointment had never occasioned.

"But, I dare say, he will write soon," observed Lady Helena; and Julia, whose sweetness of nature made her ever willing to receive comfort, was comforted by the assurance.

"I hope—I trust," said Julia, "that my dear aunt and uncle do not know, do not suspect how very weak I have been; for you know it was very weak in me to be so sure, so very sure that he loved me, and my presumption is justly punished."

"Do not, dearest girl, blame yourself, blame me, blame Lady Helena, for we fed the hopes which you would not otherwise have kept alive."

"True, very true, Miss Brightwen and Julia was not presumptuous, nor was Marcus to blame; he thought himself cured, and so did the cat in the fable fancy she was really made a fine lady for life, till a mouse ran across the room, and then she could not help running after it;—but, oh

dear! oh dear! in this case Marcus was the mouse, and the cat popped upon him to destroy him; but, thank heaven! she did not destroy him! he got away from her, and, I trust, he will unhurt return."

"Return!" cried Julia, her eyes sparkling, in spite of her, at the idea.

"Return! did you say," cried Sophia, gravely, if there be any chance of that, Lady Helena, Miss Villeroy and I must go back to London directly, and I shall write to Sir George to shew him the necessity of it."

"Why, you cannot think of doing so unkind and officious a thing, Miss Brightwen?"

"Say, rather, I must do my duty; I cannot allow Miss Villeroy to remain where she will be daily in the presence of a man whom she too fondly loves, and who has shewn that he does not love her as she deserves to be loved, fondly and exclusively.—I cannot allow her to be so degraded as to wait here like a slave in a harem, till your brother may think proper

to throw the handkerchief to her; and I am sure she would not consent to such degradation herself."

"No—no, certainly not;" faltered out Julia, pressing her closed hands against her chest, as if conscious of dreadful oppression there: "Oh no, no, no; but take me away directly, if you think he will return!"

"Is this your real wish, Julia!" said Lady Helena haughtily, yet mournfully.

"Oh yes, yes! Lady Helena," cried Sophia, "I should be mortified beyond expression, if I have over-rated my pupil's sense of delicacy and self-respect, but I will put them to the trial, and I leave her alone with you, and your influence."

She then left the room, and joined the earl and countess on the lawn: she found the latter very eager to go to Julia; but Sophia, like Lady Helena, earnestly wished that, not even by any increased kindness of manner, the mortified parents should express their regret for their son's conduct, and their sense of its effects on her;

nor could they help owning, that Miss Villeroy could no longer, with any propriety, remain under the same roof with Captain Fortescue. They then took their drive as usual, and Julia did not see them till they met at dinner; but, such a dinner, contrasted with that of the day before, when all was cheerfulness, affection, and hope! Julia's only chance for composure, was keeping her eyes turned away from every one: for every eye unconsciously watched her, and expressed such affectionate sympathy and pity, that she could scarcely maintain the calmness which self-respect enjoined. Lady Helena, whose feelings were not under such control, could not endure her sense of the past and the present, but was forced to leave the table to indulge her feelings in private. The next day passed heavily along, and no letter from Captain Fortescue! the day after was also one of disappointment and uncomfortableness; but, on the fourth day from his departure, Lord Clanross arrived at the pavilion, bearing a letter from

Marcus to his fasher; Lady Helena turned very pale when the earl gave her the letter, as soon as he had read it, and said he would attend Lord Clanross to his study. The letter was as follows, and dated, London:—

"A quelque chose malheur est bon."

"My dear father, I was wishing for an excuse to leave England, when I received a letter from our dear Augustus, to say that he is at Paris, and not well there, and, therefore, wishes me to go over to him; I shall consequently set off for Dover to-night. I sent for Clanross as soon as I arrived here, and shall make him the bearer of this, begging you to smile upon the suit which he will prefer to you, and to give him every opportunity of ingratiating himself with the amiable object of his affections. I cannot give him higher praise than to say, I think him worthy of the hand and heart of Miss Villeroy; I know no other man who is. I will write to my mother as soon as I reach Paris.

Your affectionate son,

M. F.

"So then, mamma, Marcus, by these hurried lines, formally renounces all intention of offering to Julia himself, and gives her up to Lord Clanross! but I am sure she will not have him, let him be ever so worthy. I cannot bear it, mamma! I can't indeed—Julia bears the disappointment much better than I do."

"Then there is the better chance for Lord Clanross, my dear."

"Do not say so; do not say he has any chance—but see, hither comes Miss Brightwen."

"I am told you have had news of Captain Fortescue," said Sophia, "and—"

"Did Julia send you?"

"I came of my own accord, but she is anxiously expecting my return."

"There, do you read what he says, but, I think, Julia must not!—what say you?"

Sophia could not peruse such an utter downfal to all Julia's expectations without the greatest and most painful emotion: Marcus had not only given up all preten-

sions to Julia himself, but wished another man to obtain her.

"Well! Miss Brightwen—your answer!" cried the impatient Lady Helena.

However trying to her feelings, she replied, in a voice almost suffocated with tears, "Miss Villeroy must be told the whole truth, and I wish to shew her the letter."

"Take it then! I am glad you do not insist on my applying the torture to her, however salutary it may be," returned Lady Helena, and Sophia disappeared with the letter.

"Then all is over, indeed," cried Julia; "he wishes me to accept Lord Clanross! this is too, too cruel! Leave me, my dear friend; leave me alone a few minutes, that I may endeavour to obtain strength and fortitude where best they can be found; but tell them I cannot, will not see Lord Clanross."

Sophia obeyed her; and Lord Clanross, after a positive assurance from Lord Erpingham that he would forward his pre-

tensions to Julia by every means in his power, left the pavilion, declaring he should return the next day. As soon as he was gone, Julia, ashamed of giving way to the indulgence of an unreturned attachment, left her apartment unsolicited, and appeared the most cheerful of the party. The earl and countess, indeed, and Lady Helena also, were alarmed by Fortescue's letter for the health of Lord Aston, as well as distressed for the hopeless misery of his brother; and Lord Erpingham resolved to set off for Paris, if the next letter declared that the latter was not better: but the post of the next day brought a letter from Lord Aston himself, which dissipated their alarm; and the day after, one which produced an immediate change in the plans of Julia. Sophia herself was summoned away to nurse her married sister, who, in the midst of her sickness, sorrow, and indigence, had been deserted by her husband; and at all risks, therefore, and all sacrifices to herself, she felt it to be her duty to hasten to her immediately,

and not to wait for permission to do so from Sir George and Lady Villeroy; but, before she set off, a letter arrived from the latter, desiring that both Julia and her governess would return to London instantly, as Sir George had been confined to his room some time with a violent attack of the gout, and desired to see his daughter; but they must, at Sir George's particular desire, return by one of the many stages to London which passed the pavilion daily. I cannot attempt to describe the various feelings, none of which were pleasurable ones, which were experienced by the party at the pavilion on receiving this letter. Lady Helena's feelings, however, were the most agreeable, because she felt excessive indignation, and when one feels that sensation with justice, there is a degree of self-complacency mixed with it which renders it satisfactory. Positive and peremptory, however, as the summons was, Lord and Lady Erpingham resolved not to obey it, as Miss Brightwen could not accompany Julia, and it was

impossible that she could go in a stage coach alone; nor, however properly attended, could they endure the idea of her travelling in a manner so improper for her situation in life: Lady Erpingham, therefore, wrote, as well as Sophia, to inform Lady Villeroy of Miss Brightwen's enforced departure, and of her wish to send Julia home in a post-chaise with her own maid, when they reached Surrey, whither they were then going; and having sent off this letter, Lord Erpingham gave orders for their immediate removal. It was with great pain that poor Sophia prepared to leave her pupil, and that Julia saw herself obliged to be separated from her; it was the more trying to Sophia, because she thought it likely that Lady Villeroy would resent her departure so much that she would never allow her to resume her situation; but she was a little cheered by Lady Helena's assurances that she would certainly let her come back, because she could get no one to play governess to an heiress at so low a price as she did, and

could not hire a sempstress to do so much work at so low a remuneration. To be brief, Miss Brightwen set off for an obscure town in Kent early in the morning, and at noon her noble friends and their guest were on their road to their seat in Surrey; but, before they left the pavilion, Lord Clanross, contrary to the disinterested advice of Lord Erpingham, declared his love to Julia, and was instantly and decidedly refused. But to return to Gloucester-place; the first two months of Julia's absence passed heavily with her father, as he had begun to take pleasure in her company, whenever indulged in it; and, as he had discovered that Miss Brightwen was not the silent, stupid young woman which he had been taught to believe her; but his conviction that Julia was happier where she was, than she could ever be at home, reconciled him to her absence, and when he found there was a probability that her visit to his friends, would lead to her forming a desirable marriage, he ceased to express even a wish for her presence.

Lady Villeroy, meanwhile, was full of conflicting and opposite feelings on the same subject; she rejoiced in the absence of Julia and her governess, because both were become objects of interest to Sir George; and she regretted it because she missed their assistance in the labours of the needle, nor could she contemplate the probability of Julia's marriage without jealousy and dislike: for, in the first place, she knew that Sir George would, spite of her opposition, bestow on her a dower worthy of an heiress; and, in the next, she could not endure the idea of seeing such an insignificant child as Julia take precedence of her, and Lady Villeroy be forced to follow into a room the Honourable Mrs. Fortescue. But she was called from these painful considerations to the performance of active duties by the sick couch of her husband; and Julia had been absent four months before Sir George was able to leave his bed, and was well enough even to desire her presence. But at the end of that time, as he felt himself, in his own opinion, declining

fast, and as the desired union was not likely to take place, he thought he should be justified in desiring her immediate return : nor was Lady Villeroy herself averse to it now as Julia would come back as she went— subject to her controul, and not raised in consequences of being the betrothed wife of Captain Fortescue, into a rank and a degree of consideration, which would oblige her mother-in-law to grant her indulgences that would force her to incur unnecessary expense. But Lady Erpingham's letter, proposing that Julia should travel post, as Miss Brightwen could not be her travelling companion, filled her with resentment, and she vented it on Sophia exclaiming against her assurance in daring to quit her post without leave, and declaring that if she could get any one to come to her on equally low terms, she should never return to Gloucester Place. But she saw no means of avoiding the expensive journey proposed to her, when, luckily the wife of a tenant of Sir George's was, she found, coming to London, on such

a day, from the neighbourhood of Laurel Grove, and would pass the gate of the lodge. To the care of this good woman she resolved therefore to consign Julia, and taking advantage of Sir George's sleeping moments, she proposed the plan to him when he was scarcely awake, and when all he heard distinctly, was, that Julia would by that means travel home much faster than she could otherwise do. This prospect, that of Julia's returning as quick as possible, was so pleasant a one, and he was so incapable of enquiring into the how and the wherefore, that he eagerly exclaimed,

"Oh, yes—let her come so, and the sooner and the quicker the better."

"Then you approve my plan," returned Lady Villeroy.

"To be sure; there, there,—close the curtains for pity's sake."

This was all Lady Villeroy wanted—and she wrote accordingly, not without considerable pleasure while she reflected

that she was thus issuing what might be considered as degrading orders to a girl, whom she had recently expected would be elevated above her, and rendered independent of her further control by an honorable marriage. But whatever were the feelings with which this letter was written, it was received with one feeling only, that of violent indignation by the family. Lady Erpingham, indeed, in her mild and candid manner, observed, that Julia would perhaps be better protected on the road in the coach, and safer in case of accidents than if she had gone in a chaise with a maid-servant only;—but Lady Helena would not listen to any excuse for so odious a proceeding, and Julia, though feelings of pride were unknown to her, felt her eyes fill with tears at the consciousness that Lady Villeroy, with the approbation of Sir George, had proposed a plan for her journey which was considered as a degrading one by her noble friends.

"Papa," cried Lady Helena, "do

write and say that as Sir George is too poor to do it, you will send Julia home in a post-chaise, and pay all expenses.

"Dear Lady Helena, do not talk so!" said Julia, "papa is not poor, nor is he mean, and I am sure he would not suffer—nay, it is all Lady Villeroy's doing—it is indeed."

"Well done, orator Julia!" cried Lady Helena, "to one part of your argument I agree—Sir George is not mean, and I dare say he would not suffer my papa to pay your expenses."

"Helena," said Lord Erpingham, angrily, "you might have spared your friend's feelings this unnecessary shock.—I will not wound Sir George's, by allowing our dear Julia to disobey the orders given, unless we can find a more suitable and as cheap a conveyance.—If we did not expect company at the house to-day, which I cannot leave, I would myself convey her to town, but I can spare neither time, carriage, nor horses."

"Oh, those tiresome Magnals! so their

precious presence is to prevent you from paying the dues of love and proper protection to this dear girl, papa!"

"Tiresome Magnals! for shame Helena, they are very worthy people! Worthy or not, they are our guests, Lady Helena Fortescue, and I must pay them proper respect for my own sake if not for theirs.—Miss Villeroy must, I am sorry to say, return according to the plan which her natural protectors have laid down for her, and no doubt the person selected to take care of her is respectable and trust-worthy. All I can do with propriety, I will do;—I will send one of my men-servants with her on the top of the coach;—but it would not be decorous in me to reprove Sir George Villeroy for want of proper care of his daughter—nor to affront him by measures, insinuating that those plans were influenced by an undue regard to economy."

Lady Helena said no more, as she saw that her father was determined; but she could not help, during the course of the day, muttering, in his presence, expressions

of hatred against mean maratres; and when orders were given to have a place taken in the coach for the next day, and to desire it to stop at the lodge to take up a young lady, Lady Helena begged that it might be taken in the name of Miss Julia Villeroy, daughter and sole heiress of Sir George and Lady Julia Villeroy.

"I see no necessity for that, my dear girl," coolly observed Lord Erpingham, as if he did not understand the irony of her words: "Julia is too wise not to wish to preserve her incognitia, while in a situation inferior to her pretensions, and has nothing to do but meekly to obey her father's will."

"Her father's will! my lord."

"I have said it, my lady, and your ladyship strangely overrates the hardship imposed. Our dear Julia is only seventeen, and looks much younger than she is—has not been presented—is not known; and in four hours she will be at home, without any trouble or care. Many a young lady better born than either Julia or you has travelled, I doubt not, even

without protection, on or in a stage-coach before now, during the French revolution."

"I triumph, papa, (my lord, I mean, as I am your ladyship,) but you are forced to have recourse to an extreme case to justify this, and give, as an illustration, some pennyless emigrée—but, oh, there is one marked difference! the emigrée had escaped from tyranny, and Julia is returning to it."

"Helena!" exclaimed Lady Erpingham, while her father frowned a rebuke.

Lady Helena, however, would not, could not recal her words; and, to escape the lecture she had deserved, she dragged the tearful Julia out of the room to take a walk.

The next morning, though at an early breakfast, Lady Helena still harped on Julia's journey; her manner of talking of it was changed; she wished she was going with her, especially as her papa thought it such a desirable conveyance for high-born young ladies, and earnestly hoped

that Julia would write a little book, called a Young Lady's Adventures in a Stage-Coach; she then declared, she wished she had such an opportunity of studying characters, and humbly begged to be allowed to accompany her cousin Julia.

"By all means," cried the earl. "Take physic, pomp!—expose thyself to feel what passengers feel, and know thyself a woman."

"Pomp is very much obliged to you, papa, for the permission," replied Lady Helena, smiling, "and assures you she will not forget it; she is still more obliged to you for allowing that she is a woman—an admission which my poor eighteen years never could draw from you before. But hark! I hear a horn! and, alas! not the post-horn bringing letters, but the coach-horn to bear away dear Julia. I must go and see whether she is ready."

Away she went, and full of tears herself, returned with the weeping Julia. It was even a parental leave, which her host and hostess took of their departing guest; but she went

to the coach attended by servants only, as Lady Helena was forbidden to accompany her, that the rank of the passenger might not be suspected. Lady Helena had given particular charge to the servants to ascertain the number of passengers inside and out, and what they looked like; and she heard that the person to whose care Julia was consigned was respectable-looking, and seemed very glad to see Miss Villeroy, and that there was no other passenger in the coach, but a man who seemed fast asleep in the corner.

It was sometime before Julia could prevail on herself to break from the mournful, and even tearful reverie into which she had fallen; she could not help contrasting the feelings with which she had left home, with those to which she was returning to it;—she was then full of all the hopes and the untamed vivacity of early youth, but now her prospects were blighted, her heart wrung by the sorrow of an unrequited attachment, and the vivacity of her time of life had vanished with her hopes. The marked

difference between her mode of travelling never even occurred to her; she was too wretched to give it a single thought, for there is this advantage attending conscious misery, that it renders one indifferent to external circumstances; and if Julia remembered where she was, it was with satisfaction, because she had been told that she was in the quickest conveyance possible, and would be the sooner restored to that beloved father, who was ill, and suffering.

The presence and company of Miss Brightwen she could not help regretting with excessive bitterness; but with the image of Sophia, at length returned the remembrance of her precepts, and her own unrepining patience. She would be hurt to see me thus, thought Julia; and soon after the involuntary tears were dried, and she was able to smile with her usual sweetness on the well-meant efforts of her companion to comfort and amuse her. The passenger in the corner meanwhile slept on.

When the travellers had gone about twelve or fifteen miles, a man's voice desired them to stop, and asked whether there was room inside? Julia looked out, and while thinking that both the voice and face were familiar to her, she saw that the enquirer was a groom who often attended Lady Helena; she did not speak to him, but returned his respectful obeisance in silence; but she was on the point, however, of asking him if he was going to London, as she saw him throwing a small portmanteau to the driver, when her speech was suspended by surprise, on beholding Lady Helena, dressed in her habit, her whip in her hand, evidently heated by the haste with which she had ridden, suddenly appearing at the end of a lane, and desiring admittance into the coach, motioning Julia, and her servant on the coach-box to silence, by putting her finger to her lip; Julia obeyed, but it was even with agitated delight that she saw her friend opposite to her; she eagerly asked her, in a cautious whisper, how she got

leave to come, and whither she was going ?

"I did not ask for leave, I chose to think it unnecessary, after what papa said about pomp to-day,—and I am going to London."

"To London—to us!"

"No, no, not uninvited :—I am going to see my cousin, Mrs. Seybright, who will, I know, be glad to receive me for a few days, and I took this opportunity, being resolved to share your weal or woe, Julia, in every situation of life, if possible. There, there, silly girl, do not cry; and now to look about for adventures. Who is that man in the corner, or rather what sort of person is he?"

"I cannot tell :—but how sorry and angry my uncle and aunt will be when—"

"Hush! hush! they will forgive me, I am sure, before we meet again, and I will only be alive to the present moment now ; besides, I wished to be incognita, and you have, by your nonsense, betrayed me to your friend."

The good woman, Mrs. Spence, was instantly beginning, with great respect, to promise, that she would not betray her lady—— when a frown from Lady Helena stopped her, who pointed to the man in the corner, and whispered Julia, " I really believe that sleeping beauty has slumbered on during all the noise my coming in made; but see, he is roused now, I hope he will turn out amusing, or that we shall take in other passengers."

Lady Helena was nearly right. The man in the corner seemed to have slept through all the bustle; but now he rose from his reclining posture, and cast a scrutinizing glance around him. Lady Helena regarded him with a look equally observant; she saw that he evidently beheld Julia with admiration, but she was not satisfied with the less approving and bolder stare with which he regarded her; she was, however, disappointed, when, having satisfied his curiosity, he composed himself to sleep again in the corner.

" I cannot bear this," whispered Lady

Helena; if he goes thus all the way to town I shall have derived no fun from my expedition." Accordingly, she began to talk very loudly, and on various subjects; having desired Mrs. Spence, in a whisper, to call her Miss Brown, and the good woman delighted to be made a party in the secret of a noble lady, grinned compliance, and thought Lady Helena the sweetest, funniest, and most affable young lady in the world. But vainly and variously did Lady Helena talk, and Julia modestly and softly replied.

The man in the corner appeared to sleep on; this was too much for the irritable and impatient Lady Helena. Accordingly, with her usual rashness and indiscretion, having at first contented herself with exercising her whip in playfulness on Julia's and Mrs. Spence's petticoat; she slyly, and as if by chance let it fall, and with no light stroke on the ancle of the sleeper; but she blushed and shrunk back, full of too late regret and shame, when he started up—a blush of surprise mantling

on his cheek, and regarding her with a frown of dignified reproof. In a moment, however, his expression changed; an arch smile dimpled the corner of his mouth, which he turned away to conceal, and to Lady Helena's humbly expressed hope that she had not hurt him, and her request for pardon, he good-naturedly replied, " Never mind, I am not hurt, my dear, and I dare say you did not mean to hurt me."

The " my dear" smote rather harshly on the feelings of Lady Helena, and threw Julia so much off her guard that she darted a look of angry surprise at the speaker, but Lady Helena rebuked her with a frown, and considering this familiarity as the beginning of an amusing stage-coach incident, the grand object of her present ambition, she smoothed down the ruffled plumes of her pride, and prepared herself for what was to come next.

The appearance of their fellow passenger was certainly, hitherto, not much in his favor ; his coat was faded and a good

deal worn, and was cut quite short in the skirts; a large great coat was thrown across his knees, and he wore a coloured silk handkerchief round his neck, which came over his chin, and on his head was a welch wig, that even extended to his eyebrows, but the glance of his dark and deep-set eye was so bright and intelligent, so searching, and so sarcastic, that while still sitting back he surveyed his companions. Lady Helena, proud as she was, and conscious of her own consequence, felt relieved when it was directed towards her fellow-travellers. He then leaned back in the corner again, and seemed to cover his whole face with his pocket handkerchief, but it was no such thing, for Lady Helena soon discovered that he pulled it away from his eyes, and that those eyes were fixed on her; nor could she bear their scrutiny, yet why should she mind it. To be sure he was nobody; and as his portmanteau, or cloak bag, stood up before him, Lady Helena was convinced that he was nothing more than a rider, who travelled the country for

orders, like the son of her nurse-maid. The stranger seemed as if he read her thoughts, while she directed her eyes to his cloak bag, for he suddenly stretched himself in no respectful manner; then taking off his welch wig, as if resolved to dismiss sleep for the rest of the journey, he stroked down the rough luxuriance of his glossy black hair, adjusted his neck cloth, removed the coat from his well-turned limbs, and with a smile, which Lady Helena chose to think the true smirk of a tradesman, took his luggage on his lap, and asked the ladies if they understood French silks, for he could show them a fine specimen of them if they wished to order any.

"Pray do not trouble yourself, sir," said Julia, "I do not want any thing of the sort."

"Nor I," cried Lady Helena, "but I should like to see the goods nevertheless, and may want some one day or other."

"Yes, a white gros de Naples would be a pretty wedding dress," observed the

young man, leering up in her face, "and you would look so pretty in it!"

Julia again turned round and regarded him with indignation, while the frown of offended dignity gathered on the brow of Lady Helena; however, she recollected where she was, and she took no notice either of his allusion or his compliment. The stranger now displayed the pieces of silk; there were only three of them, one was of a pale blue, the other of pink, and the third of white.

"There," said the young man, "there are goods! not but what I think we can make as good in England now—but the order was given me, so I was forced to execute it: now tell me which do you like best?"

"The pink," said Lady Helena.

"Right,—it would suit your black hair the best; and this young lady would look best in the blue," replied he, looking at Julia with a sort of respectful inclination of the head. "This white one is for my bride that is to be, when I can find

one;" and, looking up in Lady Helena's face, with a very significant and presuming stare, "who knows but she may not be far off—chances and coaches have jumbled many folks together, that would otherwise never have met!"

Lady Helena's eye shrunk from his conceited and bold glance, but there was something so ludicrous to her in the easy impudence of the man's pretensions, and her own situation, that she could not retain her gravity: and her laughing seemed the signal of general laughter, for even Julia could not forbear; and Mrs. Spence, delighted with the consciousness of being in the secret, and full of the bustling importance which such a consciousness gives, bestowed on Lady Helena answering looks of great meaning; and, ending a sort of chucking laugh, with a 'well, for my part,' and a glance at the young tradesman, so full of self-consequence, that his mirth became the most incontrollable of any, and it was with difficulty that he composed himself suffi-

ciently, as he gazed on the good woman, to exclaim —" Well, good folks! you seem very merry at the idea of my espousal, but I promise you, my merry madam, that when I marry a certain person you shall have a wedding favor."

" Very well, and be sure you do not forget," cried Mrs. Spence, chuckling again.

But Lady Helena now began to grow as grave as Julia, and though pleased with having a real stage-coach adventure, for Mrs. Spence had whispered in her ear that she would certainly have an offer before she got to London, and that she had made a conquest, she could not but feel that it was not proper she should be the subject of such conversation and such jokes; nor was her vanity gratified, while her pride was wounded, for, in reality, both were severely mortified, as she could not but be conscious, that where there is no respect there is no real admiration, and that the stranger, when addressing Julia,

was a different man to what he was when addressing her; that his manner was respectful, his countenance modest, and that he became, in appearance, at least, a well-bred gentleman; yet there was nothing in Julia's manner, except its quietness, to mark her rank and situation; no conscious dignity, no loftiness of carriage, and she had both; therefore, why was she to be addressed with familiarity, degrading flattery, and saucy glances, while Julia was accosted with such marked and almost graceful respect? Lady Helena could not answer this question with satisfaction to her feelings, and she was provoked to find that she envied Julia the gratifying, because respectful admiration which this unknown man offered her; while she was lost in this painful reverie, Mrs. Spence pointed out a fine mansion to their notice, and mentioned some anecdotes relative to its noble possessor, one of which was, that she was so cruel to her daughter, and so jealous of her, that she would not allow

her to go out, though she was turned eighteen, and kept her in the nursery still.

"I dare say that is true," observed Lady Helena, "for I remember to have heard papa say that she was not presented as she ought to have been at the last drawing-room."

Here an audible though suppressed laugh burst from the stranger, and Lady Helena looked at him with frowning amazement; but, nothing daunted, he gazed steadily at her in return, with a sarcastic smile, and pointing to a fine girl in the road, said, "I know, without my papa's telling me, that that young creature, though I dare say she is eighteen, was not presented at the last drawing-room."

"You are rude, sir," cried Julia, provoked at this sneer at Lady Helena, who did not even attempt to reply.

"If you say so, madam," the young man answered with great deference and gentleness, "I am sure that I am so, and

I beg your friend's pardon; well, I see," he continued, resuming his familiar tone, "that I shall not get an order here—so I may as well put up my pieces, and not shew my patterns."

"Oh no, shew us your patterns, I beg; we should be very glad to serve you," said Lady Helena, with a *petit air de protection*, which became her stile of features and person, when she was in her right place, but which certainly seemed ill-timed where she was; and the person whom she addressed appeared to think so, for he replied with an arch tone and look—

"Indeed! aye, I see my fortune is made now; what think *you*, you comical soul?" addressing Mrs. Spence, who, in imitation of her superiors, now began to draw herself up, and look proud.

"No more a comical soul than yourself, sir; my name is Spence."

"Thank you for your information, Miss Spence!"

"No, sir,—mistress."

"Married, then! alas! I have no hopes,"

and he turned an eye, bursting with laughter, on Lady Helena, who, unable to resist the contagion of his mirth, as she saw Mrs. Spence's countenance beaming with ill-suppressed pleasure at the compliment, which she believed sincere, begged that he would no longer delay to shew her the patterns; but he sought for them in his trunk and his pockets in vain; and after expressing great distress at his loss, he added, "but, as I have escaped with life, all other losses are comparatively nothing."

"Escaped with life!" cried all his companions at once.

"Do tell us all about it," said Mrs. Spence.

"Yes, good folks," he replied, "you see before you a man who was nearly drowned only a few nights ago, through his own impatient folly; no packet was going to sail from Dieppe to Brighton, wind was contrary, and it blew a storm, but I could not wait."

"Not wait!"

"No; I had urgent business in England, and so I got some sailors to put off in a boat with me and my baggage;" here a sort of shuddering came over him, and he hid his face and paused, but soon continued thus:—"I cannot attempt to describe the danger and misery which succeeded; it unman's me to remember the lamentation of one of the poor men for his wife and children, when we thought death inevitable! and to think it was all my doing! my rashness!"—here he paused again, and looked out of the window—"however, blessed be Providence! we weathered the storm, and landed at Bognor, though I lost every thing but my cloak-bag; but I can scarcely forgive myself for having endangered so many lives!"

"And all for what? could any business be urgent enough to require such a risk," said Julia.

Lady Helena was silent and affected; she had watched the countenance of the

stranger as he spoke, and had been almost moved to tears by the depth of feeling which his voice and looks had displayed.

" I thought so then, at least," answered he; " I had a dear suffering friend in England, who conjured me to come to him in his distress, and so I came at all hazards."

" Well, I am glad you escaped," cried Lady Helena with great kindness, " and—and all the rest of you," she added, fearful she had spoken too kindly.

" I thank you," he replied, laying his hand on his heart, and darting at her one of his most scrutinizing glances.

" But how did you make your way hither?" said Lady Helena.

" By travelling on tops of coaches, or on foot, as I feared the news of my danger might travel before me else, and a false statement agonize one loving heart."

" Oh, there is then a loving heart?"

" Yes, but she is not to wear the white silk;" and as he spoke he winked his eye at Mrs. Spence; Lady Helena saw it, and

the charm was dispelled again; all interest in the narrative or the narrator vanished, and she heard with indifference, that the loving heart which he feared to alarm, was his mother's.

CHAP. VIII.

At this moment Julia, who had been looking out of the window, exclaimed,—"Oh! stop, stop, pray stop! the coach pray do! I am so frightened."

"Stop, stop!" cried Lady Helena, "but why?"

"Oh, because I am sure I saw papa's own man on the top of the coach standing at that door, and what may he not be coming to say?"

Lady Helena now called again, and so did Mrs. Spence and the stranger out of their window, but in vain, till Lady Helena finding herself disobeyed became quite angry and vociferated an "I command you to stop fellow!" in a manner that called forth a sarcastic smile on the lip of the stranger.

"Bravo," cried he, "one would think you had been used to play queen on the

stage." However the coachman did now deign to stop, and Julia insisted on getting out and running back to the coach to confirm or remove her fears. Lady Helena was going to accompany her, when Mrs. Spence prevented her, exclaiming, as she descended the step, "No, no, pray stay my lady, and let me go."

This disclosure of her rank so utterly confounded Lady Helena, that she reseated herself, unable to make even an effort to follow her; she was able, however, to cast an anxious look at the stranger, to see whether he heard what Mrs. Spence said, and she thought she observed an expression of surprise on his countenance.

"Ridiculous!" cried she, to call me my lady, as if I were a lady!"

"Ridiculous indeed!" he coolly replied, "laughing; no, no, you are no lady I know."

"Do you, indeed!" said Lady Helena changing colour—"and pray how do you know that?"

He did not speak, but looking at her with a most provoking archness, and sauci-

ness of expression, he rubbed the ankle which she had hit with her whip. Lady Helena felt, and could not bear the severity of the reproof.

"He was sure she was no lady," he said, "and he had thus shewn her why he thought so!"

Shame and conscious degradation dyed her cheek in blushes, and tears of a most painful nature forced themselves into her eyes. To be thus reproved by an inferior! it was insupportable! but she had deserved it, and that was more painful still; however, she trusted he did not see the pain he had inflicted, for she thrust her head out of the window to look for Julia's return. She was not long absent, and she came back with a smiling countenance, exclaiming—"It was not the man I thought it was, and I am so glad, but indeed I was terribly alarmed."

"Dearest girl!" cried Lady Helena, with a mournful tenderness, as Julia reseated herself—"I am happy indeed that you have no new cause of unhappiness!"

The smile of Julia was now instantly

over-clouded, and she burst into tears, while Lady Helena's tears flowed unrestrained down her cheeks, as she gazed on her weeping companion. At this moment she suddenly looked round and beheld the stranger looking at her with an expression, and the only unequivocal expression of approbation and admiration which she had yet seen on his face, while he was gazing at her, and she was angry with herself for being so gratified at beholding it. It was, however, transitory, for he suddenly sighed deeply, and looked out of the window, as if he thought his earnest gaze at such a moment obtrusive. But he soon resumed his easy familiarity, and began to talk of his travels; nor was it long before he completely rivetted the attention of his auditors as he talked to them in his own way, as he said, that is of the silk manufactory at Lyons; and he described the process of making their silk, which he had carefully observed, and also that in Spitalfields. This conversation amused and interested Julia, whose well-constituted mind was

ever willing to turn from contemplating its trials, and she observed, that a friend of her's had often said information and instruction are to be obtained any where and every where, if one is able and willing to seek for and to receive it. Still, little did I think I should learn so much in a stage coach.

"And why not in a stage coach—did you never ride in a stage coach before?"

"Oh, no never," cried Lady Helena, eagerly—"and we shall never, never ride in one again!"

The stranger now gave way to violent laughter, which he endeavoured to hide by covering his face with his handkerchief. Lady Helena and Julia did not deign to notice this rudeness, but Mrs. Spence, conscious of the rank of the ladies, could not let it pass unnoticed, but declared, she saw nothing to laugh at in what the young lady had said, and it was all true; she was sure she would never ride in a stage-coach again, and no wonder when she met such

uncivil treatment in it from nobody knew who.

"My good lady," replied the stranger, "all ladies who travel thus, are 'nobody knows who,' to their companions, till they have by broad hints of their consequence, and especially by their animated expression of dislike to travel in so vulgar a vehicle, which they never did before, and never will do again, convincing each other that they are somebody! though still in reality they may remain 'nobody knows who,'—for few persons are as generous as yourself, and tell their names: you, I remember, told me your name was Spence, and alas! death to my hopes! you also added mistress to it." The manner in which he said this was so comically pathetic, that the friends forgot their anger awhile, and could not help smiling;—but Mrs. Spence was still more offended, as she saw he was laughing at her, and she angrily cried—

"None of your flings, young man!

either at me or these young ladies—'nobody knows who!' indeed!"

"No, no, young woman, somebody! I own them now to be somebody! for you know they never travelled thus before, and never will again." These last words he spoke exactly in Lady Helena's tone and manner, and still more offended at his presumption, she haughily threw back her head, darted at him an indignant look, and folding her arms, leaned back in the corner of the coach, as if resolved to preserve a strict silence in future.

"One of the somebodies is affronted I fear," said the stranger in a loud whisper to Mrs. Spence—"I am sorry for it—but we are all equals in a stage-coach you know, and I loves my joke, and must have it even if your friends be dutchesses in disguise; and they may be, for as I am unused to be in such grand company, I should not find them out."

"Dutchesses! no not dutchesses! but ——," here she grinned with excessive meaning, and looked as if she could no

longer conceal the secret of the rank of her companions.

"Oh! I know I have discovered something," whispered he again.

"What! what have you discovered?"

"That you are— a countess and the mother of that sullen young lady in the corner."

"A countess! I a countess! well, for my part!—there's a compliment," cried the delighted Mrs. Spence, thrusting her elbow against Lady Helena to make her notice what passed, and forgetting her usual respectful distance. But Lady Helena was not in a humour to relish the familiarity, and shrinking from her touch, she proudly said—"Your elbow is rather sharp Mrs. Spence, I desire not to feel it again."

As Lady Helena said this, her eye met that of the stranger,—and strange to say, she beheld in his an expression of disapprobation of her pride and her petulance, which not only made her repent what she had said, but even influenced her to repair her fault, especially, as she saw that the

poor woman writhed under the reproof. With her sweetest smile therefore, and her kindest tone, she took hold of the good woman's arm, and playfully passing her hand over her elbow, she said—"My dear Mrs. Spence, you seem so good-natured, that I wonder your elbow is so sharp, for none but scolds, they say, have sharp elbows; yours, therefore, belie you very much—do they not my dear cousin?'

"Yes, that they do," replied Julia, "for Mrs. Spence is remarkably kind and good-tempered."

"Oh, dear ladies, you make me blush!" cried Mrs. Spence, confused as much by Lady Helena's courtesy as she had before been by her severity; but the pleasure excited by the one, was easier to be borne than the pain to be inflicted by the other, and as the confusion soon went off, her delight expressed itself in sundry." "Oh, dears! and you are very good," uttered with blushing volubility.

Lady Helena, now pleased with herself, ventured to look at the stranger, but his

eyes were averted, and he was humming a tune out of the window. Lady Helena was mortified, she thought she had deserved a look of approbation now, but he had not given it, and she was hurt, and wherefore? why should she care for the reproof or approbation of a person like that? Lady Helena was really ashamed of her weakness, and could not but own to herself that her vanity was far greater than her pride; for if she had more pride than vanity, this man's opinion of her must have been a matter of indifference. The coach now stopped at an inn, and the travellers were asked to alight—but the ladies preferred remaining where they were, and partaking of the contents of Mrs. Spence's basket. The stranger, however, chose to alight, and while he was in the house Lady Helena desired Mrs. Spence to call the coachman and ask the name and the condition of their fellow-travellers, but he was ignorant of both; he believed, however, he was well known on the road, and was a rider from London,—but he would enquire

more of a young woman whom he brought with him, and who was on the top of the coach. Here Lady Helena exchanged a significant glance with Julia, and an indignant blush overspread her cheek, when she thought that their companion united loose morals, perhaps to impertinent familiarity. But such a suspicion never occurred to the less interested Julia; and when the coachman returned, she felt neither pleasure nor surprize at learning that the young woman was a poor sick girl on crutches on her way to London, to consult a celebrated surgeon, who was to give her advice gratis; and unable to pay the expense of a coach thither, that as the coachmen informed Lady Helena the stranger had overtaken her on the road, and assisted her along, had paid for a place for her beside the coachman, as she could not bear to go inside, and had given her money besides; and when I asked her his name, said the coachmen, "the poor thing, said, "His name? Angel, I believe, for he has acted like one to me; but I never saw

him before, though I have reason to bless him as long as I live."

Julia and Mrs. Spence listened to this favourable account of their companion, with smiles of undissembled delight, and declared they should look at him when he came in again, with much pleasure.

But Lady Helena said nothing; she was provoked to acknowledge to herself how much this low, saucy, and familiar person had interested her, and this evidence at once of his worthiness and of his situation in life, together with the consciousness that she had made an unfavourable impression on him, filled her with feelings which she could not have defined, but which it was painful to endure. While this was passing in her mind, the stranger came out, and looking up at the poor woman on the box with a smile of the utmost benevolence, he said something to her; then, seeing that he was observed, he turned away, and walked backwards and forwards before the coach. He had now taken off his silk handkerchief, ad-

justed his black silk cravat, and had concealed his short coat, which had suffered so much from wind and weather, by his great coat; and as he walked rapidly along, Julia and Mrs. Spence declared they had never seen a finer or handsomer man. Lady Helena was of their opinion, but ye—es, uttered slowly and brokenly, was all she chose to say, and Julia chided her for her reluctance, to do the young man justice.

At length, with cheeks glowing with the exercise he had taken, and with the chilly October breeze, he re-entered the carriage, and as soon as he was re-seated he resumed the air and manner so offensive to the dignity of Lady Helena. "So you would not come out and mess with us?" said he to Mrs. Spence. "Painful pre-eminence!"

"Oh, my dear countess, you know not what you lost—such a fine round of cold beef—plenty of pickled onions too, but I would not eat any," as smirking in Mrs.

Spence's face, "I did not know what might take place before we parted."

"Impudence!" cried Mrs. Spence, at once pleased and offended.

"Impudence!—I have said nothing to deserve so harsh a term," said he; "you must have given my words an improper meaning. If we should be overturned, and you fall into my arms, it would be doubly hard for you to run the risk of breaking your limbs, and being poisoned too; there was nothing impudent in that —was there?"

"Dear me, no!—but I thought you meant—"

"There, there," said Lady Helena, impatiently and proudly; "it is not necessary you should explain what you thought."

"No, to be sure," observed the simpering Mrs. Spence; "but do you really think there is any likelihood of our being overturned?—if there be, what would become of the poor lame girl by the coachman?" smiling in his face, as she spoke.

"Poor thing!" replied he; "but how did you know there was such a person there?"

"Oh, we know all about it," said Julia, looking at him, with approving kindness.

"You do!—oh the curiosity of women! I see you have been making enquiries."

"Yes, to be sure we have," cried Mrs. Spence, turning towards Lady Helena, whose cheeks glowed with blushes.

"Well, ladies, I hope your curiosity was satisfied?"

"At least your vanity ought to be, for we heard high praises of your good-nature and generosity," answered Mrs. Spence.

"Pshaw!—what a sarcasm it is on human nature that the most ordinary piece of humanity, and the performance of even the most unavoidable duty should be thought worthy of notice and praise. If I were a writer instead of a tradesman, I would write a book against the pernicious custom of lauding a man for any

kind action, especially one which he could not help performing, till there is danger of his vanity going hand in hand with his benevolence, or being the only prompter to his good deeds in future. That smile, which I have just received from that corner," looking at Julia, " and the encouraging and laudatory nod from you, my *vis-â-vis*, are enough to make me vain for life; and I am happy that their power is counteracted by the cold silence and almost frowning brow of the young lady in the other corner."

Lady Helena was about to reply, when the coach stopped to change horses, and Julia, looking out of the window, exclaimed, in a tone of vexation, " Oh, there is Mr. Mansfeldt, and he sees me."

" Mansfeldt!" cried Lady Helena, turning pale.

" Mansfeldt!" cried the stranger; and in another moment they heard him in his hypocritical tone, approaching the door, and exclaiming—" What! the Julia here! oh! all ye gods, is it possible!" On

which Lady Helena pushed Mrs. Spence to the window, that her head and Julia's, united, might prevent his looking into the coach; then throwing herself back in the corner opposite the stranger, she put a shawl over part of her face, and waited, in trembling anxiety, the result of the ensuing conference; but from beneath the shawl she could observe the stranger, who seemed eager as herself not to be seen by Mansfeldt, and was listening as attentively to the conversation.

"If you are going to London, or whithersoever you are going, I shall go with you, to protect your bright excellence," said Mansfeldt.

"Sir, I am sufficiently protected."

"Oh, no! more than one flaming cherub guarded the gates of paradise; I must come in:—Coachy, open the door!"

"Pray, Mr. Coachman, do not," vociferated Julia.

"There is no room, sir," screamed Mrs. Spence.

"The coach holds six!" screamed Mansfeldt in return, imitating her voice.

"Impudent rascal!" muttered the stranger; "but the coachman dares not let him in, after what I said."

"Oh, what shall I do?" murmured Lady Helena, encouraged by the stranger's manner, though she scarcely knew why, and looking imploringly in his face, while Mansfeldt's mean and vindictive mind led him to be the more determined on coming in, because he saw that his entrance would displease Julia, and leading the coachman aside, he said to her, "I will soon bring him to terms, believe me, and the coach holds six."

"Oh, do you hear him?" cried Julia to Lady Helena; "and see! I do believe the man is giving way."

"What shall I do?—his very sight is poison to me, now," cried Lady Helena, in the greatest agitation, "and to be seen by him here!"

"He shall not come hither, I assure

you," cried the stranger; "I will take care to prevent that;" so saying he jumped out, and Mrs. Spence following him, with her eyes, exclaimed—"There, he has taken him by the arm, and how the fellow started at seeing him; and, there he has led him away yonder; and how he looks at him, as if he would eat him alive. Oh, he is a fine young man, and his eyes look as fierce and bright as live coals; and now he has let him go, but with such a fling, I thought the fellow would have fallen; but he is not coming back with him—no not he!" The stranger was in the coach in another moment, the driver on the box, and the ladies relieved from their fears.

"And we are off, and freed from his odious presence," cried Lady Helena, clasping her hands in joy; "a thousand thanks to you."

"But how did you manage that unmanageable man?" said Julia.

"Oh, easily enough; I knew he would not persist when he saw me, and heard what I had to say."

"He knows you, then?"

"Yes; I know him, and I have told him that I do so; nor will he soon venture to cross my path again."

"Well; I cannot think how you could gain such power over him!"

"You forget that Mansfeldt is said to be deep in his tradesmen's debt, and that there are such things as writs and bailiffs."

"Oh, dear, I had forgotten you were a tradesman," said Lady Helena, blushing.

"And I had almost forgotten it myself," he replied, smiling and blushing also; "the sight of that fellow, and certain looks and tones put a lion's heart in me, and a knight errant's daring."

"But how strange it was," cried Julia, "for Mr. Mansfeldt to want to come in to protect me, as he said."

"He protect you!—the wolf so protects the lamb."

"Insolent ruffian! but I told him I wanted no protection."

"Nor would you, except from a wretch

like him; your modest dignity, your purity, and propriety of manner would be always sufficient protection to you in the eyes of a rightly feeling man: you might go over the world in safety, a Una without her lion. Good heavens! to think that there exists a man, who could have the heart to wound and injure a creature like that." As he uttered this rhapsody to the astonished and blushing Julia, he fixed his eyes on her with an expression of tender pity, and a gaze as fixed as it was affectionate; then heaving a deep sigh, he begged her pardon for the liberty he had taken in speaking as he had done, but that she was so like a lady whom Mansfeldt had used ill, that he fancied he was speaking to her.

This apology a little comforted Lady Helena, who was now nearly convinced that the unknown was much superior to his apparent rank in life, and, spite of her better judgment, was envious of his evident preference of Julia, or rather of the superior respect which he seemed to en-

tertain for her, and who feared that he, in his high-blown speech, meant to contrast Julia's propriety with her own impropriety of conduct."

"However ill Mr. Mansfeldt might behave to your friend, sir," said Julia, "I am not conscious of his ever having used me ill, except as far as teazing me, and saying rude things to me, was using me ill."

"No!—and did you never say any thing severe to him?"

"Oh, yes, very—I must own that."

"And can you suppose he ever forgave it?—depend on it he never did; and that he hates you cordially, and would injure you to the utmost of his power."

"How well you know him, and how right you are?" cried Lady Helena, significantly.

"And how well *you* know him," replied the stranger, with an arch smile, "else you would not have been so afraid of being seen by him in a stage-coach. Aye, poor thing! all your hopes of future distinction from him would have been at an end;

no more dancing with him at an election-ball, even though your father carried twenty votes to the candidate, whom Mansfeldt deigned to patronize. I say at an election-ball, for ladies who travel in public coaches cannot, I apprehend, meet Mansfeldt at any other description of ball, even though they proudly boast of being sufficiently protected."

"My friend, there," replied Lady Helena, proudly, "has a footman, on the top of the coach, to protect her, sir."

"But could he have prevented that vile man from coming in?—now do deign to own, that but for me he would have been here."

"I do own it, and with deep thankfulness, and for the sake of your affectionate kindness forgive all your—your—"

"Impertinence, you would say, I believe, and I thank you for your pardon, however ungraciously worded; but what is the hour?— I expect to be met before we reach London. I am going to dine with my mamma; as to day is Saturday, there is

no opening shop to-morrow, I shall, therefore, partake of her Sunday dinner—toad in a hole, and plumb-pudding."

"And a very good dinner too," cried Mrs. Spence; "and I should not care if I was going to eat it with you."

"Well, what say you, will you go?—my vehicle will hold two; but I forgot, you must stay where you are, to protect these young ladies."

"To protect me you mean," said Lady Helena, in a tone of pique; "my friend, you know, needs no protection but her own."

"True," he replied, "she is not likely to provoke warfare from any one but a Mansfeldt; if she had a whip in her hand, she would be careful not to let it strike *à tort et à travers;* and then her eyes are not eyes to hold inquisitive parley with those of a stranger"—fixing his own on Mrs. Spence as he spoke, as if he only meant to point her out as the object of his sarcasm—"yes, indeed, a young lady like that is to be trusted alone any where, however

unbecoming her the situation in which the fault of others has placed her :—securely she smiles on the forward and bold." Here he paused and looked at Lady Helena, who, in spite of her pride, in spite of her conviction hitherto, that it was an inferior who addressed her, was now convinced she had been mistaken, and felt almost awed by the soundness of his remarks on Julia, and by the wise severity of the reproof, which she could not but feel was directed at herself; she listened, therefore, with downcast eyes, and a burning cheek, unable to rally under his oppressive glance ; she then took off her hat, and busied herself in adjusting her hair, in order to escape from the awkwardness of her feelings. Julia, surprised and flattered, was silent, from an indistinct consciousness that there was a meaning in the stranger's words which implied censure on her friend, while it complimented her, and also from a strong but vain wish to say something in her defence. He, meanwhile, had folded his arms, and was gazing

on the subdued and humbled Lady Helena, with evident admiration, and as if absorbed in contemplation of her:—"And yet," said he, bursting from his reverie, "though one admires and reverences the woman whom her own qualities protect, still it is most delightful to bestow protection on a trembling female, especially when the beautiful bully, turned into a confessed and conscious coward, requires to be assisted, and looks up beseechingly in one's face; such a moment as that in a man's life is worth a million, even though it may cost him the peace of the remainder of it." At these words, uttered in a tone softened almost to tenderness, Lady Helena ventured to look up, almost doubting the evidence of her ears; but she looked down again, when she saw the admiring expression with which the strange person was regarding her; nor did she look up again till she saw he was looking out of the window, and heard him exclaim, "I wonder where my vehicle is!—we are within twenty miles of London."

At this moment Mrs. Spence cried out, "Dear me, what a handsome carriage, with two servants in fine liveries, is standing at the bottom of that lane!"

"Indeed!" said the stranger, "but, my good lady, do you see an ordinary looking gig also, just big enough to hold your humble servant and one other person?"

"No, not yet!"

"Well, well, I shall see my vehicle soon, I dare say; so I may as well stop here."

Accordingly, while Mrs. Spence expressed her sorrow at losing such a funny companion, he called to the coachman to stop; then bowing gracefully and respectfully to Julia, and nodding adieu to Mrs. Spence, he suddenly seized the ungloved hand of Lady Helena, and while she angrily struggled to withdraw it, he pressed it to his lips, and jumped out of the coach; he then gave money to the coachman and throwing his cloak-bag over his shoulder,

ran out of sight in an instant. Lady Helena almost sobbing with mortification, and offended pride, could not help venting her feelings in exclamations of insolent, presumptious creature! to bow so respectfully to you Julia, and to take such a liberty with me! what could he mean by it? altogether his behaviour was most extraordinary, and really, Julia, much as I love you, I cannot see why you should be so much extolled above me, and be taken for such a superior person, while I was not allowed to look like a lady at all.

"Nor I neither, I am sure, dear Lady Helena;—and he could not be a man of any penetration," Julia replied with great simplicity."

"Dear, candid, generous girl!" cried Lady Helena,—"but you are—you are my superior, and the man's penetration is admirable;—but, oh, that ever I should have exposed myself to the mortifications and alarms of this day!"

"Oh! my patience!" now screamed

out Mrs. Spence, " there he goes! as sure as life! and that fine carriage was his, and he is a great man."

" Are you mad?" cried Lady Helena, changing colour, and following the direction of Mrs. Spence's eyes, " and of whose are you talking!" She said no more—she saw a gentleman who looked like the stranger driving himself in a most elegant phaeton, two servants in splendid liveries, following him on horseback. Still Lady Helena could not, would not believe the evidence of her own eyes, because she dared not believe it—as she thought she saw a coronet on the carriage, and dreaded lest the stranger should turn out to be the being whom she most wished to behold, and whom she most wished should see her to the greatest advantage. It was therefore with agony that she grasped the hand of Julia, exclaiming,

" Oh! if it should be so, if it should be he, I am a wretch indeed! but we shall soon pass him again, he is stopping while the servant adjusts the harness:—oh!

'tis he, he has taken off his hat; yes, yes 'tis his fine profile, I shall go distracted! oh! it is evident that he knew me all the time by my likeness to Marcus, and wished to mark his disapprobation;—but we are passing him,—I will sit back: yes, yes, it is a viscount's coronet, and I know the motto!"

Julia wondering, and speechless at Lady Helena's mysterious words, now turned to the window to convince herself of the identity of the stranger with the driver of the phaeton, and to salute him as he passed; but he did not look off the reins which he had now resumed, and was adjusting; however, she saw that beyond dispute the stranger and the driver were one.

"Did he not deign to look in?" cried Lady Helena."

"Deign! no not once; but, do pray tell me who this person is, that agitates you thus, my dearest friend? surely, surely it is not Lord Restormel!"

"It is, it is; and I am so miserable! so very miserable!" Here she gave way to a

violent burst of tears, unrestrained even by the presence of Mrs. Spence; nor could Julia say any thing to console her, though she felt the most sincere desire to do so, as she remembered his character, for even fastidious delicacy in his ideas of the conduct of woman; and could now only too well understand the pointed manner in which he had praised her, evidently meaning at the same to reprove her friend.

Julia was now certain that he had been awake when Lady Helena entered the carriage, and had known her from her likeness to her brother, and from other circumstances, and had guessed who she herself was.

The effect his presence and interference had over Mansfeldt was now explained, and Julia's kind heart bled for Lady Helena's distress, because she had often heard her declare her wish to charm Lord Restormel, and she could not but fear that his rigid judgment would be up in arms against her, from the circumstances in which he had just beheld her.

Still Julia remembered with pleasure that he was Lord Restormel, and knew the real rank of the party; the familiarity, and even the rudeness of which Lady Helena complained, lost much of their offensiveness; for it was evident that he so presumed, in order to shew her the disagreeable consequences of the situation in which she had placed herself; she also recalled, with joy, what he had said concerning the pleasure of protecting 'a beautiful bully,' when turned into a 'confessed coward;' and the looks still more tender and flattering than the words which accompanied what he said. Nor could Julia be easy till she had tried to impart to Lady Helena the comfort she had herself received from these recollections; but she communicated them in vain. To be made acquainted with Lord Restormel, whom she had learned to consider as the noblest of human beings; to conduct herself so as to ensure his esteem, and make esteem the ground work of a warmer passion, had long been the darling object of her hopes

and her desires; nor, while meditating on the conquest of his valuable heart, had she any intention of withholding her own; on the contrary, her own might be said to be prepared for an instant surrender as soon as the conqueror should be disposed to demand it. To him, and to him alone, she used to imagine that the sacrifice of her bad habits, and of her own will, would be sweet and salutary; and she never thought of her introduction to Lord Restormel without a resolution to model her thoughts, her looks, and her actions, according to his ideas of feminine propriety. But now that meeting, so long desired and so long unexpectedly delayed, had taken place, in a situation in which she ought not to have been seen, and which an unbecoming disregard of the niceties of filial duty had prompted her to seek. She had conducted herself in it with a disregard of decorum that had called forth the disapprobation of that man, whose approval she had taught herself to believe necessary to her happiness, and if it were

indeed possible that Lord Restormel had beheld her with eyes of personal admiration, she well knew from the account she had heard of his self-command, and the power of his judgment over his feelings, that he would not allow his heart to yield to an attachment which his understanding disapproved. In the meanwhile, what was the effect of this interview on her? He had excited in her even an uncontrollable interest, when she believed him to be in an inferior station of life, by the uncommon graces of his person, the remarkable variety and expression of his countenance, and the traits of just thinking, of fearless benevolence, and energy of character, which circumstances had elicited, an interest of which she was ashamed, but yet found it impossible to control; and now that she discovered, in this bold reprover, the very man she most wished to behold and to please, and felt that in all probability she had now lost him for ever, a sorrow, as romantic as her attachment, took possession of her soul, and unused to govern her sensi-

bility, she wept in uncontrollable anguish on the shoulder of Julia. The well meaning Mrs. Spence was at first awed into silence by the sight of a distress which was so violent, and to her so incomprehensible; but at last she took courage, and said by way of consolation, "If Lady Helena had taken a fancy to the young man, surely she ought to be glad to find that his rank was equal to her own; and if he liked her the worse for a bit of fun, such as riding in a stage-coach for once, he must be a cross patch, and he was not worth thinking about at all;—but she was very sure that was not the case, and that he was ready to devour her with his eyes."

To the former part of this speech, whose officious daring she would in a happier moment have haughtily reproved, Lady Helena listened without interest, and with little attention; but she now eagerly started up, and desired to know what Mrs. Spence meant by devouring her with his eyes.

"Oh, that when your ladyship did not look at him, he looked at you, with such

looks, I cannot exactly say how, but as if he thought you very handsome, and did not know how to take his eyes off you."

"Can I believe this, Julia," said Lady Helena, smiling, through her tears, "after all the marked homage to you, and his countenance while gazing on you?"

"If this gentleman be, indeed, Lord Restormel," replied Julia, blushing deeply, and with a faltering voice, "the strange and strong interest he seemed to take in me is only too well accounted for; pity often looks like love they say, and if he knows all, no doubt he pities me."

"True, true, if he knows all; but who should tell him?—not Marcus; but I remember that papa wrote to him after that sad rencontre."

"Did he; however, even if he does know all, I am sure, by his manner, that he does not despise me, and I can bear it."

"Despise you!—no, Julia, no!—would to heaven I were as sure that he does not despise me."

"Dear, my lady, how you talk; how

could any young gentleman despise you? and as to him, poor dear, I am more afraid he should love you too well, and break his heart if you do not love him too."

Lady Helena was now sufficiently herself again, to feel, that degraded as she was in her own eyes before, she was sinking still lower by the indelicate publicity which she was giving to her fears and her mortifications in the presence of such a witness; and shrinking alike from her wonder and her soothings, she coldly said, that she was afraid the gentleman would tell her brother where he had met her, and that he would be very angry with her; she then declared her resolution of banishing him and his impertinence from her mind.

"No, no," cried Julia, eagerly, "I am sure, quite sure, he will not tell—tell *him*."

"And why so?"

"Oh, because—because—oh, because it is not likely he should betray you to any one."

"I see what you mean, but are too

generous to utter, Julia; you mean that he is too kind to expose me."

Julia did not reply, and as Lady Helena threw herself back in her seat to meditate on what had passed, Julia's last words added bitterness to her contemplations, for even Julia felt that to mention having met her would be to expose her. She did not long remain quiet, but starting up, she begged that Mrs. Spence would call the coachman, who was then off the box, to ask him if he knew who their fellow-traveller was? The coachman replied, that he only knew he was as generous as a prince, but he believed he was only a lord. "I suspected," said he, "he must be a great man, by the way in which he looked and talked to that queer chap that wanted to come in, but I would not have let him. Why, bless your heart, the gentleman when he first got out paid me the fare of the other two places inside, and told me he would on no account suffer the ladies already in to be incommodated by another passenger."

" Well now, really that was quite genteel, indeed," cried Mrs. Spence, as she sat down again. " Did not choose us ladies to be incommoded."

" Oh, he is a charming man."

Julia said it was very kind, but Lady Helena said nothing; she felt it to be another proof how much Lord Restormel disapproved of what he saw, and she spoke no more during the journey.

At the inn, to their joyful surprise, they found Sir George Villeroy's carriage and servants waiting for them. And had the coach not arrived as soon as it was expected, the servants had orders to add leaders to the carriage, and go to meet their young lady; for when Sir George heard how his daughter was to return, he positively denied having given the consent which had been surprised from him when he was nearly asleep, and had sent off the chariot with the above-mentioned order. But Lady Helena, however, desired her father's servant to accompany her, as she

was not sure she should be received by her friends, and should not require his attendance.

As Mrs. Seebright's house was in the way to Gloucester Place, Lady Helena desired to be driven thither immediately. Before they drove off Lady Helena was excessively annoyed by the very natural vanity of Mrs. Spence, who was met by the friends she came to visit, and who, eager to shew she had had a lady of quality for a travelling companion, wished her ladyship good evening, in an audible voice, as soon as she had hoped Miss Villeroy would find Sir George and Lady Villeroy well, adding, with an arch smile, and a significant nod, to shew the familiar terms on which she was with an earl's daughter—"I think, my lady, you will not soon forget your journey in a stage-coach, your ladyship."

"No; I shall never, never forget it, indeed," exclaimed Lady Helena, as the carriage drove off, after she had bowed in proud silence to the grinning Mrs. Spence. I have heard it said," continued Lady

Helena, "that it is not the situation in which one is, but one's conduct in it, that can disgrace one; I was, through my own folly, in a vehicle where I should not have placed myself; but it was my trumpery egotism, my restless desire for notice and adventures, that caused my situation to disgrace me. Had I been contented to remain quiet and unobtrusive as you did, Julia—had I been easy to sit still like a modest gentlewoman, without making so improper an effort to rouze the attention of my fellow-traveller, even he, with his rigid ideas, could not have been displeased with my behaviour, but might have admired me as he did you."

"But after all you did nothing so very offensive, and he must have thought that you did not mean to touch him with your whip."

"Indeed he thought quite the contrary, he was certain the touch was intentional."

"But it will be easy to assure him that it was not."

"No, Julia, no—not at the expense of truth."

"How! did you really mean to give him a stroke with your whip?"

"I did; nay Julia, pray do not look so horror struck! I did, but I can no more deny than I can defend my conduct; and were it to make Lord Restormel abhor me for life, were he to say, 'to be sure you struck me by accident,' I should reply, no, it was by design."

"That I am sure you would! But how glad I am, Miss Brightwen was not present! she would have been so vexed!"

"And I am so sorry she was not! for had she been there, her reproving eye, or rather that eye looking at me, 'more in sorrow than in anger,' would have kept me in order even by the wish of not afflicting her. Julia, happy girl! had Miss Brightwen been my governess I might have been like you, and Lord Restormel might have approved instead of scorning me."

"Do not talk of his scorning you—I am sure he admires you in spite of——"

"Yes, in spite of his judgment; but I will see if I cannot bend that haughty judgment before the throne of love, and if

I can but subdue that arrogant and rebellious heart, why then—"

"Then what!"

"I cannot exactly tell," replied Lady Helena, (many rebellious, contending, and proud feelings passing in rapid succession over her beautiful face, not one of which was understood by Julia), and their conversation was interrupted by their arrival at Mrs. Seebright's door, at which stood a female servant, then the only inhabitant of the mansion, for the family had left town suddenly only the day before, as Mrs. Seebright had been ordered to Cheltenham by her physician at a few hours notice. This put the finishing stroke to poor Lady Helena's vexation, as she found herself under the necessity of taking possession of her friend's empty house, or of forcing herself on a woman whom she disliked and despised, an unexpected and unwelcome guest. She could not however hesitate to comply with Julia's earnest request, that she would accompany her to Gloucester Place, where, from her father at least, however unwell

he might be, she was certain of a warm reception.

"At all events," replied the humbled Lady Helena, "I can return home to-morrow, or the next day, when I expect my own maid; I desired her to follow me; and I can keep the footman in town, therefore I can return in a more proper way than I came; and as for the little mortifications I may meet with from your maratre, Julia, I have deserved them all by my foolish exploit, and must bear them with all due meekness: however, I hope to grow wiser from this experience, and to remember that it is impossible to calculate on the consequences of one wrong or foolish action."

"How often I have heard Miss Brightwen say that," exclaimed Julia!" oh! how I shall miss her in Gloucester Place; but here we are, and I declare there is dear papa at the window."

END OF VOL. I.

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